Language Attitudes, Stereotypes and Ingroup Membership: Examining Young People's Perception of their Speech Community in Newcastle-upon-Tyne

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Abstract

This thesis aims to enrich our understanding of language and social identification by providing up-to-date insights into both the structure and construction of contemporary language attitudes, among 153 older teenagers (aged 16-18) years in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. It investigates perceptions of the local speech community by analysing *speaker-evaluations,* free- association keyword *impressions* and directly elicited *affiliations,* interpreting traditional speaker-evaluation research methods from an interactionist perspective. Multiple levels of identity preference are also considered, as is the situated data-collection context. The thesis applies an integrated theoretical framework incorporating concepts from language regard, social identity theory and the stereotype content model, to focus on the related concepts of *attitudes, stereotypes* and *ingroup membership.*

Evaluations and impressions were analysed quantitatively to identify preferences, examine stereotype profiles of speakers along the 'big two' dimensions of status and social attractiveness, and interpret ingrouping and outgrouping. Content analysis of *impressions* revealed concepts that are important in forming impressions of speakers. Lexical repertoires were interpreted as pointers towards societal ideological assumptions. Listener strategies for distancing and connecting were also identified. *Affiliations* indicated the level of locality that is most pertinent to ingroup identification.

Analysis of both evaluations and impressions revealed that one local speaker was profiled as a 'standard' speaker, evaluated highly along both status and solidarity dimensions, indicating that neither linguistic insecurity nor covert prestige characterises responses to Newcastle speech. Evaluative judgements and selective lexical repertoires provided concurring evidence of outgrouping in responses to Standard Southern British English speech, demonstrating that prevalent discourses of the north as 'other' to the south of England continue to influence responses to SSBE speech. Less coherent profiling in responses to other northern speakers, implied that traditional stereotypes of speakers of other northern varieties are being disrupted.

Language ideological assumptions of superiority and inferiority endure, made manifest in several latent themes which largely reflected the 'big two' dimensions. Three interactive listener strategies for constructing impressions of speakers emerged: *appraisal, affective reaction,* and *ascribed perspective.*

Discrepancies were revealed between prototypes elicited by conceptual labels and verbal guise speaker samples, revealing preference for less localised labels. The disfavoured label 'Geordie' seems likely to signify traditional forms, whereas moderately accented, but still local speech, may represent a modern reference norm.

The thesis provides up-to date evidence of contemporary language attitudes in Newcastle, adds to methodological debate concerning speaker-evaluation research, and extends the use of the stereotype content model to the analysis of free-chosen keyword associations and responses to speaker samples.

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Author's Declaration

I declare that the work contained in this thesis has not been submitted for any other award and that it is all my own work. I confirm that this work fully acknowledges opinions, ideas and contributions from the work of others.

Ethical approval has been sought and granted by the Faculty Ethics Committee on 6th October 2016. An amendment to include original voice recordings was approved on 1st December 2016.

I declare that the Word Count of this Thesis is 85,670 words.

Name Judith Taylor

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Chapter 1: **Social meanings of accent in Newcastle in the north of England: a cultural overview**

1.1. Introduction

1.1.1. Overview

Varieties of language index social meanings, including stereotypes of speakers, which influence listeners' perceptions. Ideological underpinnings of such perceptions frequently result in a deficiency view of 'non-standard' vernacular varieties, often shared by speakers of those varieties. Indeed, the extent to which 'non-standard' varieties of language are stigmatised, resulting in real-world consequences for speakers, has been attested in many previous language attitudes studies worldwide (for an overview, see Garrett, 2010). In England, the stigma associated with urban and northern ways of speaking has a long history, whereby an established 'austrocentric' viewpoint (Wales 2006), which perceives the south of England, particularly London, to be the norm-producing centre of 'correct' English, assumes the inferiority of northern varieties of English.

However, in the north of England, despite the existence of a wealth of linguistic research into northern Englishes (for a collection of recent work see Hickey, 2015), such studies predominantly focus on production. In Newcastle upon Tyne, which is home to one of the most recognised varieties in England (Montgomery 2012), substantial research documents changing vernacular language usage, yet there is a lack of up-to-date complementary research with a principal focus on contemporary language attitudes (Strycharczuk, 2020). Essentially, little is yet known of the language attitudes of 'Generation Z', now reaching maturity; in particular, whether a de-standardising shift in language ideology is evident in young people's perception of local voices and local identity.

This is important within linguistics, as sociolinguists consider language attitudes to be an essential factor in language change in the locality (Watt 2002; Strychaczuk, 2020). More widely, it is important because the sense of linguistic self is essential to individuals. Since speakers of varieties often share perceptions of stigma attached to local ways of speaking, a phenomenon known as linguistic insecurity (e.g., Labov,1966, 2006; Trudgill 1974), the study of language regard has implications for the mental well-being of young people.

1.1.2. Scope of the study

Within the scope of this thesis, it would not be possible to investigate every aspect of language regard in the north of England, which is a broad umbrella concept encompassing various theoretical concepts, methodological approaches, and foci. Therefore, the research explores perceptions of their speech community amongst a selected participant group of older teenagers living in Newcastle upon Tyne, focussing on language attitudes towards speakers of local and wider regional varieties of speech. More specifically, the study investigates three related concepts: *attitudes*, *stereotypes* and *ingroup belonging*. The study hopes to contribute to our understanding of both the structure and construction of language attitudes by eliciting three types of attitudinal information: *evaluations, impressions,* and *affiliations.*

1.1.3. Why study perceptions of speech community membership?

In fields as diverse as genetics, economics, philosophy, psychology or history, questions of identity concern the world's leading intellectuals in our era and are, according to Tom Clarke, editor of *Prospect* magazine, a 'new preoccupation' of our age (The Guardian, July 2019). Language use is central to this concern. 'It constitutes a text, not just of what the person says, but *of the person*, from which others will read and interpret the person's identity in the richest and most complex ways' (Joseph, 2004 p225 italics in original). Thus, attributed membership of the local speech community importantly shapes notions of a linguistic self, with regard to both how speakers see themselves and also how others see them.

1.1.4. Background to the research

1.1.4.1. ***Perceptions of locality***

The concepts of 'language variety' and 'speech community' depend on shared social meanings of linguistic variation. Research suggests that not only is the north/south divide a perceptually prominent concept in England, recognised as existing both culturally and linguistically (Wales 2006, Montgomery 2007, 2012), but also within the north of England, further distinctive dialect areas are identified, predominantly associated with major cities. In Newcastle-upon-Tyne, awareness of a distinct 'Geordie' dialect is particularly strongly enregistered (Agha 2003; Beal 2009), which has come to index stereotypical speaker characteristics. According to Pearce (2015, p 3), 'within present day North East England, Geordie is strongly associated with Tyneside in general and the city

of Newcastle in particular'. However, iconisation of this voice, a process whereby linguistic features linked with social images have come to symbolise the social group (Irvine and Gal, 2000), belies the dynamic process of language change underway. Research charting language change in the area indicates that movement is in the direction of a supra-regional variety (e.g., Watt 2002), and it seems reasonable to suppose that the social meaning attributed to local speech may also be changing, making Newcastle-upon Tyne a particularly interesting location to consider both how 'modern' local varieties of speech are currently regarded by local people, and how local, regional and national identities are related.

1.1.4.2. ***Perceptions of prestige***

In common with other societies which have a 'standard language culture' (Milroy, 2001 a p 530), i.e., one in which speakers share a belief in a correct or canonical form of a language, responses to spoken English in the UK vary in predictable patterns according to whether the speaker is perceived to have a 'standard' accent or a regional variety. In England, urban regional varieties have been consistently rated as lower in *status* than RP or Standard English, whereas more localised varieties have often been evaluated more favourably in terms of *social attractiveness* criteria such as friendliness (e.g., Giles, 1970; Coupland and Bishop, 2007; Garrett 2010). Judgements of individuals, based on the way they speak can have impact in various domains, including education, employment, and the criminal justice system (Giles and Billing, 2004; Garrett 2010; Giles and Rakic, 2014). Language attitudes thus are revealing of language-ideological structures, and levels of prestige indexed (Silverstein 2003) to specific varieties of speech, which result in real-life consequences for speakers of such varieties and are therefore important in the study of any speech community.

1.1.5. Methods and outcomes

Garrett (2010) proposes using a combination of methods to research language attitudes. The combination of *evaluations, impressions* and *affiliations* has been selected to address the limitations inherent in each method (section 2.6 details these considerations). A verbal guise speech stimulus, comprising nine speakers from different 'nested' levels of locality, was specifically designed to elicit language attitudes at the data-collection site. In a repeated-measures design, indirect *evaluations* of local ways of speaking were collected alongside self-reported *affiliations* towards local places and voices. In addition,

impressionistic associations of the same nine speakers were gathered using the keywords technique.

Several outcomes are anticipated from this exploration. Through quantitative analysis of *evaluations,* the study hopes to establish whether linguistic insecurity characterises attitudes to local speech and to reveal information about the stereotypes associated with local ways of speaking. Qualitative analysis of *impressions* is intended to investigate how these stereotypes are constructed through lexical choices. It is intended to offer insight into the concepts that are important in forming impressions of speakers, provide information about the lexical repertoires selected to express them, and interpret these as pointers towards societal ideological assumptions. It could also identify listener strategies for distancing and connecting, positioning the self in relation to the speaker. Through directly elicited measures of *affiliation,* the study can also consider the level of localness that is most pertinent to ingroup identification, taking into account that 'a sense of belonging' may be felt at different degrees of locality.

1.1.6. Core concepts

In this thesis I adopt the position suggested by Soukup (2013), that speaker evaluations can be interpreted as a contextual interaction of meaning making. I attempt to provide a model of how this can be achieved by drawing on three theoretical frameworks: language regard, social identity theory, and the stereotype content model. A framework characterising the relationships between these theoretical models is developed in Chapter 2, but as a brief overview, language regard is an umbrella term grouping together language attitudes, metalinguistic beliefs about language, and language ideological frameworks. Social identity theory is useful in understanding relationships between ingroups and outgroups, and the stereotype content model predicts stereotypes arising from two fundamental dimensions in impression formation.

The core concepts on which this thesis builds are *standard language ideology, stereotypes, language attitudes* and *ingroup membership.* These concepts sit within Preston's model of language regard (Preston 2017), an umbrella term which is inclusive both of the wider societal discourses and ideologies which operate on a macro level to shape perceptions, and also of those perceptions of language varieties at group and individual levels. (Detailed discussion and definitions of language regard, language ideology, stereotypes, language attitudes, and self- categorisation is provided in chapter 2). In brief, individuals define their group memberships through contrast, where

differences within the group are perceived to be less important than those between the *'ingroup'* and other *'outgroup'* members. *Language attitudes* are understood to be favourable or unfavourable orientations to a language-related attitude object (in this case varieties of speech) which I see as contextually contingent acts of positioning, but also can reference sedimented social meanings and have some degree of stability. *Stereotypes* are shared beliefs about the characteristics of groups and their members, and can influence attitudes, giving rise to predictable emotional and sometimes prejudiced responses. I see *standard language ideology* as socially constructed norm-enforcing set of values which influences beliefs and stereotypes about 'correct' or 'the best' forms of English, some of which are taken for granted as 'common sense', such is their familiarity as discourses in the culture.

1.1.7. The current context

For a new generation of 'Geordies', the indexical social meaning of local speech may be being renegotiated, particularly as it is young people who tend to lead language change and attitude change (e.g., Eckert 1997), and possibly are less entrenched in conservative ideologies of language that favour standard accents (Coupland and Bishop 2007). Changing social conditions, such as economic, demographic, educational and political change may have an influence on such perceptions for a generational cohort, popularly described in news media as 'Generation Z' (born since 1997) who have been identified as sharing different formative experiences than the 'Millennials' cohort who were born earlier than them (Dimock, M. (2019).

1.1.8. The research problem

The social stigma associated with Newcastle speech (Watt 2002) is understood to be due to a pervasive stereotype that conflates regional ways of speaking with perception of social class (Montgomery 2007, Wales 2006, Watt 2002). The premise that the speech of Newcastle-upon-Tyne is a particularly stigmatised variety has been considered explanatory of language change involving the rejection of traditional forms (Watt, 2002; Strycharczuk, 2020). However, these explanations have been somewhat contradictory. Whereas Watt (2002) predicted that rejection of influences from London and the south-east would be important in the construction of north-east identities, more recent research into the emergence of a General Northern English variety (Strycharczuk 2020) has found that Newcastle speech differs from some wider regional pan-northern variants and shows greater convergence than they do, towards some southern variants. Nonetheless, there is

a surprising shortage of up-to-date attitudinal information detailing the extent to which the social stigma, believed to characterise attitudes towards local speech in Newcastle, is still prevalent. As a result, the existing literature provides an inadequate basis for interpretation of current patterns of language variation and change.

1.1.9. Significance of the research.

This study will contribute to the body of knowledge on evaluations of speech in the north of England by providing a comprehensive picture of perceptions of their speech community among young people in Newcastle -upon-Tyne. This will help to address the current shortage of language attitudes research identified in the area and will provide value to researchers of language variation and change as well as other researchers of language attitudes.

Secondly, since there is considerable scholarly debate concerning both theoretical perspectives and methodological choices in language attitudes research, the research will contribute to this debate by proposing a model of three methods used in combination i.e., *evaluations, impressions,* and *affiliations*, intended to mitigate some of the shortcomings identified by critics of the traditional matched guise technique.

The thesis also proposes an integrated framework for analysing the social meaning of accented speech that brings together three theoretical models i.e., language regard, social identity theory, and the stereotype content model**.**

1.1.10. Research aims and questions.

Given the lack of recent research with a focus on language attitudes in Newcastle, the study conducts an enquiry into the ways in which young people perceive their membership of the local speech community. The primary aim of the thesis is to provide up-to-date contextualised speaker-evaluation information for analysis, in order to provide insight into the structure and construction of contemporary language attitudes among young people in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Conceptualising speech community membership as a symbolic construct, entailing individual self- categorisation, shared evaluative judgements, and taken for granted societal discourses, the thesis aims to contribute to knowledge about language and social identification by addressing three guiding research questions:

RQ1

What do *evaluations* of local, area, regional and national varieties of speech reveal about perceptions of speech community membership amongst young people from Newcastle?

RQ2

i. What concepts are important to young people from Newcastle in forming *impressions* of local and wider regional speakers?
ii. To what extent are keyword associations revealing of *language ideologies?*

and

iii. In what ways do these keyword associations express distance from or connection to speakers?

RQ3

To what extent do claimed *affiliation* with the local voice and with the local place reflect ingrouping in responses to speakers?

1.2. **Structure of the thesis**

If we are to understand how local language is regarded by speech community members, we must study both the structure and construction of language attitudes, comprising societally shared stereotypes and actions of ingroup orienting towards local varieties. The extent to which stereotypes of speakers are steeped in cultural tradition, the implications for speakers, and the possibilities and limitations of techniques for accessing attitudinal information will be discussed in the following chapters.

Chapter 1

The remainder of this chapter presents details of the cultural and linguistic context of the present study, arguing that pervasive stereotypes of northerners and northern ways of speaking are well established and are socially maintained.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 will provide theoretical background to the present study: justifying why folklinguistic evaluations of speech are considered important, identifying the concepts within the umbrella term of language regard, and arguing that language attitudes are

central to this concern. The chapter discusses the concepts most relevant to the present study: standard language ideology, stereotypes, language attitudes and self-categorisation. The chapter attempts to reconcile different approaches in the field, establishing key principles to inform the study. The aim of the chapter is to provide the reader with the necessary background to recognise how current theoretical and methodological positions underpin the present study, and to appreciate why it is felt to make an important contribution to our understanding of language and social identification in the north of England.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 will present findings from previous studies which have informed current knowledge about language regard in speech communities. The chapter will begin by reviewing early studies that established the recognised findings of language attitude study, with a focus on judgements of prestige relating to standard and non-standard varieties of speech. Secondly the chapter will show how previous literature has uncovered stereotypes of speakers and given evidence that attitudes to language varieties have consequences for speakers. The chapter will then consider studies which have thrown light on the importance of language to self-identity and community membership.

The chapter will conclude by summarising how the findings of previous research suggest that the present study will usefully contribute to the rich tradition of research into Tyneside speech.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 describes the aims of the present study and gives detail of the methodology selected to accomplish those aims. Firstly, it begins by reminding the reader of the objectives of the study and the research questions. Details are then given of the participant group. The chapter then goes on to give details of the research instruments (which were specifically designed for use in the situated context) and the basis for their selection. An account is given of the pilot studies which were conducted to test elements both of the research instrument design and of the procedures for implementation. This includes analysis of the value of the pilot study in informing the methodological decisions made for the main data collection. Full details of the development of the research instrument are then expounded. Ethical considerations and implementation procedures are then clarified. Finally, the chapter outlines the selected tools for data processing and analysis.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 presents results and discussion of speaker evaluation tasks in response to nine speakers, presented in a verbal guise speech stimulus. Differences between evaluations of speakers are examined firstly in terms of positivity and negativity and secondly in terms of status and social attractiveness. Groupings of responses are investigated. The discussion then considers the 'nested' levels of proximity of the speakers to the participant group in terms of local area, regional and national levels.

Chapter 6

Chapter 6 presents results and discussion of a free-chosen response task, which recorded word associations to capture impressions formed of the nine speakers, presented in the same verbal guise speech stimulus. Firstly, the responses are analysed as indicators of positivity and negativity towards each speaker. Secondly, responses are interpreted in relation to the two key interpersonal dimensions of status and social attractiveness. The chapter then goes on to analyse the themes emerging from coding of the keyword data, considering the evaluative lexical repertoires available to the participants, the concepts important to them in forming impressions of speakers, and the distinctiveness of their use in relation to different speakers.

Chapter 7

Chapter 7 discusses the results of the affiliation questions which directly measured orientation towards local voices and local places using conceptual labels. Firstly, claiming and denial of the local voice is explored, comparing affiliation at two levels of locality. The results are then compared with perceived degree of difference in the speech stimulus. Orientation towards local place identities is then explored.

Chapter 8

Chapter 8 draws together the findings from chapter 5, 6 and 7, drawing conclusions concerning the current attitudinal orientation towards the speech community among young people in Newcastle upon Tyne. Limitations of the present study are considered and recommendations for further work are suggested.

1.3. Perceptions of regional distinctiveness and stereotypes of the north of England

The rest of this chapter outlines the context of the present study, beginning with a discussion of the regional identity of the north of England, which, as section 1.3.1 will establish, has been demonstrated to be an important concept for people living in the region. This part of the chapter will discuss cultural portrayals of the region and will look at evidence that although 'the north' is defined in opposition to the geographical south, this contrast is also frequently a class-based distinction. The commentary is intended to provide context for the social meanings of the language variety in question in the subsequent chapters, that of Newcastle-upon Tyne in the north east of England.

The north east of England, whilst indisputably belonging within the north, is regarded as arguably having both its own distinctive identity and its own language variety. In section 1.3.2, the focus of the commentary narrows, exploring the reasons for this cultural distinctiveness. This section will also position the city of Newcastle within this north-eastern context. It is hoped that this section will give the reader an impression of the importance of the 'nested' regional position of Newcastle within the wider regions of the north-east and the north of England.

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1.3.1. Where or what is the north of England?

The north of England is not so much a place as an idea. It is nevertheless an important and 'real' concept in identity construction, which is shared by people from all areas of England, according to broadcaster and writer Stuart Maconie, who writes, 'Good or bad, the north means something to all English people wherever they hail from' (Maconie, 2007 p2). This meaning derives from a complex relationship between geographical place, identity, and language.

1.3.1.1. *Perceptions of boundaries and belonging*

The concept of a 'north-south divide' has a long history, in evidence during the times of the Normans, the Vikings and the Romans (Jewell 1994). Nevertheless, lacking an official line of demarcation between the two halves of the divide, it is not a specifically bounded territory. As a compass direction, the concept of 'north' is unproblematic, but as a

delimited space, as in the term ‘the north of England’, the geographical area is not bounded by a measure of latitude. County boundaries are frequently used to distinguish areas belonging to ‘the north’, commonly regarded as reaching approximately the southern boundaries of Yorkshire and Lancashire. The southern boundary of Lancashire, however, means different things to different people, as county boundaries differ according to whether they refer to ‘historic counties’, or to the ‘administrative counties’ currently used as local government areas. Since 1974, re-drawn county boundaries have placed parts of ‘historical’ Lancashire into neighbouring Cheshire, influencing local identities, as this border was meaningful to people living there (Beal 2010). One traditional definition, the ‘seven-county north’ includes Cheshire in its north, comprising the historic counties of Northumberland, Durham, Yorkshire, Cumberland, Westmorland, Lancashire and Cheshire (Russell 2004).

Whilst county boundaries may be influential in forging local identities (Beal 2010; Llamas 2007), boundaries of belonging may also be shaped by topographical features, such as rivers or mountain ranges, which carve up the landscape giving physical reference to place identity. The Pennines, a range of hills separating the west from the east within the north of England, persists as a border despite shifting administrative boundaries. Rivers provide a similarly stable feature, serving as possible demarcations of the southern border of the north of England, although there is disagreement as to which river could claim border status. Discussion of the ‘north- south divide’ conceives of the border as a line crossing England west to east between the Severn and the Wash (Martin 2004), or between the more northerly Mersey and Humber, a line more or less replicated by the M62 motorway (Wales 2000). The national border with Scotland delimits the northern boundary where the most northerly part of England borders another country, but as the north of England has no official status as an English region, various different organisations have arrived at their own differing southern boundaries. Regional health authorities, BBC News regions and Ordnance Survey mapping all differently interpret the extent of the territory lying within the north of England.

Popular awareness perhaps offers a more useful foundation in a perceptual study than the various different delimitations offered by different official bodies. Figure 1-1 shows the results of a YouGov poll conducted in 2017, which surveyed which government regions the public believe to be in the north and the south of England. Within England there are nine regions, which serve statistical and administrative purposes. The nine regions, which

were labelled with the letters A-I, were presented on maps to 7,963 adults, who were asked to say whether each was in the north, the south or neither. The results of this survey suggest convincingly that popular perception of the areal location of north of England includes at least the three government regions of The North East, the North West and Yorkshire and Humberside.

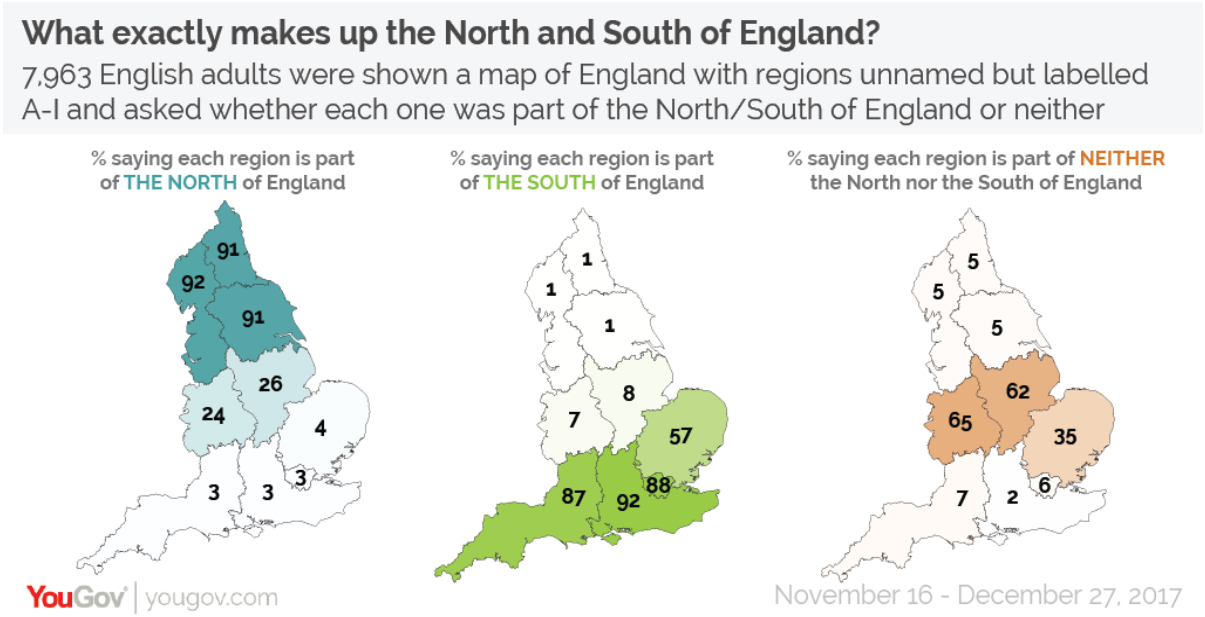

Figure 1-1 Poll conducted by YouGov: 'What exactly makes up the North and South of England? (YouGov 2018)

Popular perception, then, places Newcastle unarguably within the north of England. However, as individuals belong to multiple areas and regions, they may affiliate with them at different levels of locality. It would seem valuable to consider which memberships are more important to participants when investigating their language attitudes.

1.3.1.2. *Linguistic markers of northern identities*

Linguistic difference is perceived to constitute another essential aspect in defining northern territory, although there is also disagreement about the boundaries of linguistic locations of a north of England area (Montgomery, 2007, 2012). Dialectologists have identified variants that can be used as linguistic markers of the speech of a particular place and used isoglosses of these variants as the basis for mapping 'dialect areas' onto a linguistic atlas. There is a degree of 'fuzzines' concerning the linguistic border of a northern area, as different isoglosses are drawn for each variant. Two isoglosses are

accepted as being particularly important in distinguishing the boundary between areas of northern and southern speech (Wales 2006). These variants can be described using Wells lexical sets as the TRAP/BATH split and the FOOT/STRUT split (Wells 1982). The short phoneme /a/ is found in the TRAP lexical set (e.g., tap, back, badge, hand) for all dialects. In the BATH lexical set (e.g., staff, grass, ask, dance, laugh) there are two phonemes one short /a/ and another long /aː/. In northern England, words in the BATH lexical set are "very generally pronounced with the same short open vowel of TRAP, namely /a/" (Wells 1982: 364). In northern England there is often agreed to be no split between the FOOT set (e.g., put, bush, full, pudding), pronounced with the phoneme /ʊ/, as opposed to the STRUT set (e.g., cup, blood, pulse, budge, trunk) where RP has the phoneme /ʌ/. The map in Figure 1-2 shows the dividing isogloss for the two splits, which in both cases runs roughly from the Severn to the Wash.

Figure 1-2 STRUT/FOOT (solid line) and TRAP/BATH (broken line) isoglosses (Chambers & Trudgill, 1980: 128)

Northern English encompasses heterogeneous varieties with common pronunciation of these two variants. However, not only is diffusion of southern forms influencing levelling of northern speech towards a 'standard', but also linguists have also observed a process

of dialect levelling *within* the north, towards a pan-northern wider-regional standard. Recent evidence from the Cambridge dialect survey (Leemann et al 2018) suggests that the single phoneme pronunciation of the BATH/TRAP sets has been resistant to dialect levelling towards the English of the south-east, underway throughout England, and remains a 'stark north south divide'. However, drawing on the same data set, phonemic distinction has been found to be present in the FOOT/STRUT vowels, which in other recent research are said to lack opposition between /ʊ/ and /ʌ/ for present day Northern English speakers (Strycharczuk et al. 2019). More recently, Strycharczuk et al (2020) investigated the degree to which vowel sounds in urban varieties from the north of England were distinguishable, finding Leeds and Sheffield to be highly confusable, as were Leeds and Manchester. They argue that the vowel systems for Leeds, Sheffield, and Manchester are all representative of pan-regional General Northern English, a variety which is educated, urban and northern. However, the authors state that 'Liverpool and Newcastle systematically depart from any possible description of GNE' (Strycharczuk et al, 2020. p. 15), suggesting that there may be attitudinal reasons for resistance to levelling in these locations. These findings highlight the importance of the concerns of the present study, because in a shifting linguistic north, stereotypes of northern speakers and perceptions of speech community identity may also be undergoing modification.

Montgomery (2007, 2012, 2015) conducted extensive research into *perceptions* of linguistic boundaries in the north of England, and found that although individuals differently interpret the exact demarcation of the 'border' between the north and south, it is nevertheless a relevant concept for many people in the United Kingdom, who generally agree on the existence of a 'north-south divide'. It has been found that those living closer to the border, who wish to claim a northern identity, tend to mark a demarcation further to the south, a tendency referred to as 'southern-shifting' (Montgomery 2007p 156). In the survey locations used in Montgomery's research, participants wished to claim northern identity for themselves. Those who could unassailably claim northern identity in Carlisle, close to the Scottish border, exhibited more disparity in where they placed the north-south divide, which Montgomery interpreted as meaning that there was no threat to their identity from any such placement. For participants in Crewe, less deviation was available to them, as the north-south division needed to be placed further south than their own location, in order to guarantee their in-group status as northerners.

The southern boundary of the north of England, then, varies not only between official organisations, but can depend on individual circumstances, and affiliations. Likewise, its linguistic isoglosses do not definitively distinguish between northern and southern voices. Nevertheless, wherever its southern boundary may be placed, Newcastle-upon Tyne is located unarguably within the north, whether or not its people wish to claim northern identity.

The north is not only a territory, however, but is an ideological concept, which has been called a 'space-myth' (Shields 1991). This idea from cultural geography informs the current consideration of speech community membership, as modern study of linguistic variation goes beyond the plotting of variant usage on a dialect atlas, and considers the social meaning of language and places from local perspectives, which is increasingly acknowledged to be important (Corrigan and Montgomery 2015). The concept of the north is thus important to people because 'northerness' and northern ways of speaking carry cultural connotations, which will be further discussed in the next section.

1.3.1.3. ***The image of the north of England***

The idea of the north, according to Davidson (2005), evokes a 'precise-even passionate' response in most people'. The idea is important in many cultures worldwide, at once universal, but also individual, as 'Everyone carries their own idea of north within them.' These ideas are influenced in European contexts by history, literature and myth, imagining the north primarily as a place of remoteness from civilisation, which can be either a place of purification or one of barbarism.

Leerssen (2019) suggests that in literature, images of the north draw on a much broader cultural schema whereby norths, as 'other' to souths, share common characteristics operating whatever the location. This schema allows the north to be used as a cultural metaphor, which is widely understood as it forms 'part of the implicit frame within which knowledge is situated' (Leerssen 2019 p14). Leerssen illustrates that the universality of the characterisation extends to fictionalised worlds, such as of *Game of Thrones*, in which 'the grimly northern Winterfell, home to the rough-hewn but honest Stark clan is opposed to the decadently sybaritic southern metropolis of King's Landing' (Leerssen 2019 p15).

In an English context, as described in section 1.3.1.1, the idea of the north is perceived in terms of a divide between two regions of the country. The history of the north–south

divide in England dates back throughout history, and even has its origins in geological difference, which prompts Jewell to declare that:

> ‘Analysis of the political, economic and social material indicates that the north-south divide is literally as old as the hills, and has real manifestations throughout recorded history’ (Jewell 1994 p6).

However, it is the more recent industrial past that has had an enduring influence on perceptions of difference between the north and the south. As Wales points out, “many of the current stereotypes of the North of England … derive from the industrial revolution and the huge expansion of industry and growth of the Midland and northern towns” (Wales 2000, p5–6). Two stereotypes persist: harsh industrial working-class environments, or the wild untamed places of romantic literature. ‘The north of England is still seen as a place of mills, mines and factories, or a place of sheep and hills’ (Spracklen, 2016 p10). In the quotation reproduced below, Rawnsley (2000 p3) encapsulates how historical, geographical, cultural, and political difference is perceived to shape identity in the region:

> The North of England evokes a greater sense of identity than any other 'region' of the country. At the same time, it provokes the most derision and rejection from those whose identity has been constructed and shaped elsewhere. The reason for this is that the North is much more than a tract of land. It is a reified landscape which encapsulates various rhetorical interpretations of the past and the present, of classes and cultures, and of geographical and topological features of a large area of England. No other region has such an intensified 'sense of place’.

The popularly accepted concept of a ‘divide’ between the two can thus provoke strong feelings, as the north of England has been considered not only ‘other’ to the south, but also inferior.

Literature has been particularly influential in shaping perceptions of the north and its people. Russell (2004 p88) suggests that ‘a small number of highly influential texts established a distinct version of the north and then kept that view alive as a result of their continued popularity.’ Two novels, with a focus on the image of the industrial north, give evidence that social division in England was already perceived as a crisis in Victorian England. Mrs Gaskell’s *North and South,* a social novel published in 1855, centres on industrial relationships in the fictional town of Milton, based on Manchester, which was

a centre for the cotton industry at the time of the industrial revolution. Conditions of the working poor are depicted, and labour relations difficulties are explored. *Hard Times* by Charles Dickens also portrayed brutalising working conditions in a fictional northern English mill town. Gaskell's novel refutes stereotypes of the harsh industrial north, populated by uncouth capitalist mill owners and poverty-stricken workers, as the protagonist, Margaret Hale, challenges her own prejudices through her experiences in the novel. Nevertheless, it is through the eyes of a southerner that the reader encounters the northern characters, so even as the story reveals them to be more fully rounded characters than first impressions would suggest, the qualities that Margaret Hale comes to value in the northern characters are still seen as 'other' to the south. The novel's title, 'sets up an absolute contrast, a sharpening of distinctions between pastoral and industrial worlds' (Bodenheimer 1979 p281), highlighting the geographical and cultural division in Victorian Britain between the genteel rural south and the brutal environment of the urban north of England.

Russell (2004 p89) suggests that 'these early Victorian writings helped fix a specific image for the north' which has subsequently influenced cultural representations of the north in a diverse range of cultural forms and practices: travel literature, fiction, dialect, the stage, radio, television, feature film, music, and sport.

Imagology, the study of cultural stereotypes as presented in literature, theorises that an image can only be studied in terms of oppositions. 'The idea of the north must thus be studied as the discourse of a north-south opposition' (Leerssen 2019 p14). One of the ways in which this contrast is evoked is through the speech of characters.

Schubert (2007 p88) suggests that representations of northern English vernacular in novels and films contribute to 'the general notion of 'northerness' and that these may be influential in shaping 'both the external perception and the internal self-image of the region' (p87). Shubert discusses representations of northern English vernacular in two Victorian novels (Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte and North and South by Elizabeth Gaskell), and three films (Brassed Off, The Full Monty and Billy Elliot). Shubert demonstrates, through examples from these books and films, that that vernacular speech is usually represented as a contrast with standard British English, commonly expressed as phonological difference, with less attention to grammatical or lexical difference. In these examples, three functions of vernacular representations are identified; firstly to provide local colour, secondly to show that the characters belong to 'the underprivileged

working class' and thirdly to 'support the emotional involvement of the reader or viewer'. These emotional responses can be both negative and positive, as the vernacular can be used to support two contrasting stereotypes in depictions of northern characters; 'Stereotypes can vary between the alien and rude northerner on the one hand and the sympathetic and amiable one on the other' (Schubert 2007: 87). Shubert suggests that overt and covert prestige norms (Trudgill 1972) influence emotional involvement in response to depictions of northern English. The northern character may be the object of ridicule if their language is interpreted as 'foreign unintelligible ridiculous and substandard' in contrast with the overt prestige of standard British English. However, as in the three films examined by Shubert (where northern speech is used to establish ingrouping among the characters and establish them as members of their local community), they may be seen as having desirable qualities of friendliness and loyalty. Consequently, their speech may carry more positive connotations, such as 'quaint familiar original and sincere' (Schubert 2007 p87), extending the covert prestige associated with speech community membership to the viewer.

Spracklen (2016 p6) argues that essentialism has resulted in a 'common-sense idea of northerness' which is constructed and performed by northerners as well as being imposed from outside through 'shared myths'. In these myths, northerness is culturally marginalised, as 'the margins of Britain remain as spaces to invoke otherness in wilderness, a landscape where rough people live rough lives, their position in capitalism tamed by mocking laughter of the elites at accents and diets' (Spracklen 2016 p11). The image reproduced in Figure 1-3 imputes such mocking laughter, or at least ignorance, to imagined 'other' Londoners. The map illustrates a caricature of Londoners' perceptions of the north, in which London exerts a wide sphere of influence, and civilisation and services diminish beyond its limits.

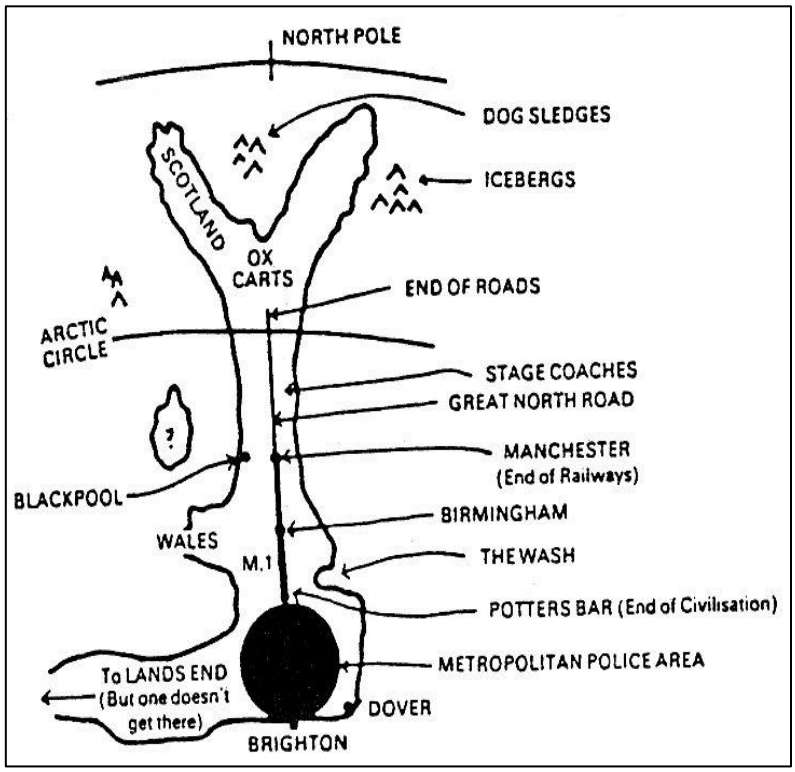

Figure 1-3 How Londoners see the north, at least according to the Doncaster and District Development Council

(Gould & White,1986 p 22)

Recent analysis of interviews with northern comedy performers and of newspaper comedy reviews (Fox, 2018) revealed a cultural bias affecting northern performers on the basis of their accent. Fox identified a 'northerness effect' by which the region is stigmatised and othered in relation to the south of England and is seen to be stuck in the past. Nevertheless, northerners themselves can invoke the stereotypes of 'authentic' northerness to exclude others from belonging to the 'imagined community' (Anderson,1983), frequently essentialised as a white working-class masculine culture. Such images of the north can be perpetuated by 'professional northerners' (Spracklen 2016 p10), who are identified as 'Actors and other celebrities [who] have found a niche in popular culture through fetishising and celebrating a form of northern culture that is comforting to the audiences and readers'.

Stereotypes of the north, northerners, and northern ways of speaking thus can be maintained by speakers themselves, who sometimes use these stereotypes to signal positive attributes, but which nevertheless essentialise speech community membership. Looking into attitudes towards the speech community to which participants may be supposed to belong, it clearly is valuable to take into account not only favour and

disfavour towards speakers, but also to find out more about the stereotypes people are drawing on when formulating their responses. Hence in this study, I seek to uncover some of the concepts relevant in forming impressions of the imagined community of speakers.

1.3.1.4. ***The north of England in current political discourse: the northern powerhouse***

In recent years, the UK government's 'Northern Powerhouse' project has featured prominently in news media discussion of the north of England, and consequently may have contributed to current perceptions of the region.

Proposing his flagship initiative, George Osborne (then Chancellor of the Exchequer) used rhetoric which, despite emphasising the positivity of his vision for the north, nevertheless underscored a deficiency view of the north as 'other' to the south of England. The north is contrasted specifically with London, which was described by Osborne as 'that undisputed global city' upon which the rest of the country was predicted to become 'unhealthily dependent' (Osborne 2014).

Osborne concluded his speech with an exhortation to co-operate with government, using a metaphor of manual labour 'I'm prepared to roll up my sleeves and get it done; you are too. So let's get it done' 'Roll up my sleeves' suggests preparation for a manual task, during which shirt sleeves would get dirty or be obstructive to the task, so this metaphor appears to be an allusion to the heritage stereotype of northern working class identity, which Osborne is seemingly claiming for himself.

One of the key concepts of the northern powerhouse is that 'the north', comprising the cities of Newcastle, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and Sheffield and Hull, needs to act collectively to challenge global cities. This agglomeration would be supported by transport links, which would allow the cities of the north to operate as 'a northern mega-city' (Lee 2017 p 481). However, in the years since this idea was first proposed, the 'northern powerhouse' concept has perhaps highlighted differences within the region as much as common purpose, whilst also continuing to emphasise inequality across the north/ south divide. The 're-balancing agenda' (Lee 2017 p 480) has been greeted with some scepticism in response to budget cuts affecting the region., as exemplified in a BBC report from June 2019 'Northern Powerhouse 'undermined' by austerity, five years on'. Press articles have dubbed the initiative 'the northern poorhouse' as local government

funding has been stripped, a contemptuous pun which has been used by the national newspapers *The Guardian* and *The Mirror*, as well as regionally in the *Manchester Evening News* and. the *Newcastle Chronicle* along with many blog posts from groups and individuals throughout the region. By referring to the Victorian institution of 'the poorhouse', the writers of these articles tap into the pervasive discourse of disadvantage, inequality and inferiority associated with the north of England's history.

This section has considered that social meanings ascribed to the north of England and northern ways of speaking are well established and widely shared, and that these may have influence on identities claimed by individuals and attributed to them by others. It would seem reasonable to expect, in the light of such a weight of historical, political, and cultural tradition, that the notion of the south of England as 'other' to the north may be reflected in attitudinal data collected in the present study. In the next section we will zoom in on the north-east region and consider the extent to which it is typified by the images of the north presented hitherto.

1.3.2. Cultural and linguistic distinctiveness in the north-east of England.

Section 1.3.1 has illustrated that stereotypes of the north, northerners and of northern ways of speaking share a common defining perception of being 'other' from the south, and suggested that some places are 'perceived to embody an idea or essence of north or northness' (Davidson 2005). Newcastle, situated in the north east of England, seemingly shares a prototypically northern character, having developed rapidly during the industrial revolution, and suffered post-industrial decline in the latter half of the 20th century. This commonality belies the fact that the north of England is far from homogenous in its language and culture. Indeed, the north-east is seen as having both a strong regional identity (e.g. Colls and Lancaster, 1992) and a distinctive 'Geordie' way of speaking (Beal 2000), associated in the popular imagination within the region with the city of Newcastle in particular (Pearce 2015).

1.3.2.1. ***Political and economic marginalisation in the north-east of England***

The north east is widely held to have a particularly strong regional identity (e.g. Colls and Lancaster, 1992; Middleton and Freestone 2008, Fenwick 2017, Lemprière & Lowndes 2019), deriving principally from its industrial heritage. For Colls and Lancaster, this regional identity is 'a state of mind, to do with histories and feelings about itself' (Colls

and Lancaster, 1992: xii). At a time of apparently developing interest in regional governance at the end of the twentieth century, Colls and Lancaster advocated for regionalism as a means of redistributing economic and political power, devolved from centralised Westminster, arguing that 'The North-East finds itself as a forgotten corner of a British nation-state' (Colls and Lancaster, 1992: xii). Recently, Dan Jackson emphasised common experience in the history of the region, maintaining that 'the north-east remains one of the most distinctive parts of England' (Jackson 2019 viii). However, despite the strength of regional identity in the north-east, lack of clarity about the region's boundaries is seen to be a contributing factor mitigating against political cohesion in the region. According to Fenwick (2017 p2), the north-east of England has a 'strong subjective identity', but local governance has been made more difficult due to successive alterations to its objective boundaries, a process described by Pike et al (2016) as one of 'churn, disruption and discontinuity'.

Changes to political county boundaries have been found to influence sense of belonging, language use and perceptions of varieties of speech (Beal 2010, Llamas 2007), thus lack of clarity concerning objective boundaries of the north-east region may be of importance to perceptions of belonging in a speech community within the north-east.

As mentioned in section 1.3, the north-east is one of the nine regions of England, which are the highest-level tier of subnational division in England but does not exist as an area of governance. The area has seen successive regional development initiatives, each with slightly different memberships. At the time of writing, local government structures are again in a state of flux. The north-east region has suffered from the dismantling of regional-level support from government, and as a result 'the North East is hollowed out, broken up and largely ignored' (Shaw and Robinson 2018 p848).

The pan-regional northern powerhouse agenda, set out in 2014, asserted an intention to create a combined and powerful north to counterbalance the economic 'weight' of London and the south of England. This economic initiative focussed on the cities of the north as the engines of regional growth. Politically, a transfer of power from central government to local government has also been sanctioned through the establishment of Combined Authorities, which allow for decentralisation of powers and resources to a local level through negotiated devolution agreements. Thus, a combination of pan-regional development and localised deals has reduced the influence of the regions as economic and social units. As a result, according to Shaw and Robinson (2018 p845) 'the

North East today does not have a voice; it has virtually no power and little influence'. Whereas other northern combined authorities, in Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield, Tees Valley and the West Midlands, voted in favour of mayoral elections and devolution of powers and funds, the North East Combined Authority (NECA), comprising the seven councils of the north-east region, voted in 2016 against such a deal. The failure of the north- east area to establish a combined authority and negotiate a devolution deal with central government has been seen as a 'puzzle' (Lemprière & Lowndes 2019 p150). After all, 'The North East of England has traditionally been marked by a strongly defined identity, broadly coalescing around industrial and post-industrial cultural norms and practices' (Lemprière & Lowndes 2019 p 154) and seemed likely to benefit from a devolution settlement. However, combined authorities were envisaged as city-regions, with the Manchester devolution process regarded as a model (Shutt & Liddle). One of the reasons suggested for the failure to reproduce the model in the north-east region is that the North East Combined Authority (NECA) does not function as a coherent functional economic area, but is polycentric, including competing rival city interests in Newcastle, Sunderland, and Middlesbrough as well as the large rural areas of Northumberland. 'Despite sharing a historic North East identity, within the NECA area there is a multitude of other localised identities, which sometimes conflict with one another' (Lemprière & Lowndes 2019 p 156). It should be noted that similar tensions could also exist in other combined authorities, including Greater Manchester, which comprises ten metropolitan boroughs. The combined authority subsumes the city of Salford, and other towns and boroughs which formerly belonged within the historic counties of Lancashire, Cheshire, and Yorkshire. Despite such potentially conflicting identity orientations within the region, Greater Manchester had existed as a metropolitan county in the decade following local government reorganisation in 1974 and had continued to develop stable structures for strategic co-operation between its constituent district councils through the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities. This foundation of close partnership contributed to strong collective leadership, in contrast to the north-east region. The deal process was made more challenging for the NECA, as there was a lack of agreement that the government's preferred mayoral combined authority structure was most appropriate for the region. Three of the north-east local area councils formed a break-away group, and the North of Tyne Combined Authority (NOTCA) was established in November 2018, covering the historic county boundaries of Northumberland and the local authority areas of Newcastle upon Tyne and North Tyneside. However, as 'the new area does not relate

to any meaningful economic area; nor does it have any historical traditions' (Shaw and Robinson 2019 p847), the combined authority does not seem to be in a particularly strong position to redress inequality impacting on the region.

Considering the rise of creative industries in Britain, (which includes the design, software and digital, advertising, film, broadcasting, architecture, publishing, music and performing arts industries), Hughes and Atkinson (2018) suggest that the established stereotypes dividing north and south will perhaps become less relevant in the near future, due to a newly emerging division within the north itself. They identify a 'southern north' independent from the 'wider north'. It is suggested that 'creative clusters' are linked with economic growth and are more widespread and better connected in the' southern north' including Manchester, Leeds and Liverpool. Consequently, it is suggested that a rise in cultural prominence for the area of the 'southern north' could leave behind the more geographically distanced cultural clusters of Newcastle and Middleborough.

Political and economic marginalisation combined with geographical isolation contribute to conditions in the north-east characterised by 'long-standing economic, social and environmental problems' (Pike et al 2019 p8), circumstances which also may shape stereotypes and self-stereotypes of the region's people and their language.

1.3.2.2. ***Geordie stereotypes: identity and speech***

Colls and Lancaster (1992) suggest that Anderson's concept of 'imagined communities' (Anderson, 1983) is as applicable to regions as to nations, in that they are communities formed on the basis of how we see ourselves and are perceived by others. It is almost a quarter of a century since Sir John Hall (life president and former chairman of Newcastle united football club) coined the term 'Geordie nation' in protest against perceived marginalisation from and domination by the capital. Sir John invoked this imagined community thus:

> 'The Geordie nation – that's what we're fighting for. London's the enemy. The South-east's the enemy. You exploit us, you use us, you take everything you can from us but never recognize our existence' (*The Independent*, 21 June 1994 quoted in Beal 2000 p. 354).

His passionate remarks suggest a parochial patriotism that is framed as antagonism towards the south, specifically London, which is portrayed as an exploitative aggressor.

‘Geordie’, however, is a contested identity term, frequently a geographical reference, with varying restrictions on eligibility. Colls and Lancaster use the ethnonym’ Geordie’ to refer to people living in the whole of the north east region, claiming this to be an act of repossession, as the word had historically been associated with the coalfields of Durham as much as Tyneside. At a time of apparently developing interest in regionalism at the end of the twentieth century, they suggested that ‘now seems as good a time as any to reclaim ‘Geordies’ for the whole North-East’ (Colls and Lancaster 1992: xi). Likewise, Sharkey rejects ‘petty parochialism about who can consider themselves Geordies’ (Sharkey 2014 p. 10) and advises that in his discussion of Geordie identity, ‘Newcastle, Tyneside and the North-East will be used interchangeably’. In a recent history of the region, Jackson (2019: vii) preferred to refer to its inhabitants using the ethnonym ‘Northumbrians’ rather than the word ‘Geordies’, considering that ‘enduring local rivalries have unfortunately ruled this out’. He describes local rivals Geordies and Mackems as ‘two feuding tribes of Tyne and Wear whose modern rivalry has obscured how much they share in common’. What they share in common, according to Sharkey (2014, p. 10) is a version of regional identity which can be understood as a ‘brand’, defined by four ‘pillars’ of Geordie culture: class, accent, drink and football. Accented speech is thus not only associated with a geographical locale but is also linked to a social persona. Sharkey finds historical precedents for a modern ‘thick daft Geordie stereotype’ (Sharkey 2014 p. 257) and suggests that caricatures of Geordie identity encourage people to ‘play the Geordie’ (Sharkey 2014, p. 242), rather than acknowledging heterogeneity amongst the population. Agha (2003, p. 243) refers to such caricatures as ‘*characterological figures*, or “social personae” linked to speech’. (Section 2.4 gives more detail of the processes by which such stereotypes become established.)

Joan Beal investigated the features that characterise Geordie speech in popular dialect literature. She examined a series of texts where features of the Geordie accent are represented by semi-phonetic spellings and identified changes over time in language features which have been considered stereotypical of local speech. She agrees that in Tyneside and Northumberland there exists a ‘strong regional sense of identity closely associated with an acute sense of the differences between these dialects and standard English/RP’ (Beal 2000 p343). For example, ‘The most common and constant feature in all the texts is the use of <oo> for the SE <ou> or <ow>, indicating the traditional Tyneside pronunciation …/u:/ contrasting with the /au/ of RP’ (Beal 2000, p. 349). Beal notes that this feature is little used in everyday speech but has become associated with

particular lexical items in specific contexts, which are used to signal Geordie identity. As some features have attained the status of stereotype they have 'become tokens of a regional identity of which Geordies are proud' (Beal 2000 p359). Beal argues that dialect literature asserts localised identity, acting as a form of resistance against the spread of more supralocal variants, which may be replacing traditional forms.

Watt (2002) agrees that rejection of influences from London and the South-east is important in the construction of north-east identities and suggests that any rise of a distinct north eastern identity would be shaped by such opposition (Watt 2002 p 56). However, Watt disputes the perception put forward by Viereck (1968) and Griffiths (2002) of the north-east as a forgotten corner, far from centres of influence, bound by tradition, maintaining that the region is not as linguistically or demographically static as has sometimes been supposed.

Sharkey uses the term 'Akenside syndrome' (named after Mark Akenside, a Newcastle-born 18th century poet and physician who is said to have been ashamed of his humble origins) to describe 'a condition of feeling ambivalent towards Newcastle or Tyneside despite often retaining a strong emotional bond with and/or sincere affection for the area' (Sharkey 2014 p4). This ambivalence, when applied to the local language, can be demonstrated as linguistic insecurity, a term introduced by Labov (1966), whereby individuals share a deficiency view held by outgroup members of their own in-group's local ways of speaking, as compared with an idealised standard. In the case of Newcastle upon Tyne, the Geordie variety suffers from a 'history of acute stigma attached to Tyneside speech' (Watt 2002 p44). This stigma, associated with lower social class and with unintelligibility, appears to be shared by Tynesiders themselves, modifying regional pride. Watt(2002 p 57) anticipated that continued language levelling in Tyneside may be 'a trade-off between modernity and regional loyalty' adopting 'modern' forms with wider regional currency in the north- east or 'General Northern British English', whilst still resisting incoming variants from the south of England. However, as yet, little information is available to identify the level of locality that is most relevant in developing a 'modern' Geordie identity.

Discussion of the social and cultural context of \Newcastle upon Tyne, the key site chosen for the present study, has highlighted the importance of perceived community identity, in which speech is a marker of membership. The next section discusses the extent to which allegiance is integral to the concept of a speech community.

1.3.3. Speech communities as symbolic constructions

This section discusses how the term ‘speech community' is conceptualised in the present study, which considers ‘community’ to be a symbolic construction. The researcher shares the view put forward by Morgan (2014 p1) that ‘The study of speech communities is central to the understanding of human language and meaning.’ However, the concept of speech community is a contested one within sociolinguistics, not least because the concept of community is itself difficult to define.

Morgan points out: ‘Communities can be defined and identified in terms of space, place, affiliation, practices and any combination of these terms’ (Morgan 2014 p2). In popular usage, the term ‘community’ often refers to geographical locality, such as in a ‘community centre’, where people from a locality can congregate. Government policies of ‘community-based health care’, or ‘community policing’ share an understanding that there exists a local community outside of the organisational structures of hospitals or police forces. Non-local communities of people who share common characteristics are also widely accepted as existing, such as faith communities or ‘the LGBTQQ community. Large group membership at a national level may also share a sense of community, especially where the difference between the community and ‘outsiders’ seems greater than the differences between members. Sarason (1974 p1) considered a sense of community to depend upon a ‘feeling of belonging’ and suggested that membership of communities ‘is one of the major bases for self-definition’ (Sarason 1974 p157). McMillan and Chavis (1986) emphasise the affective component in the perception of a ‘sense of community. Four elements have been identified that combine to construct the psychological ‘sense of community’ (McMillan and Chavis, 1986): membership, influence, meeting needs, and a shared emotional connection.

The present study is concerned particularly with the idea of membership, an element of the sense of community that requires boundaries that ‘define who is in and who is out’ and ‘separate ‘us’ from ‘them’’ (McMillan and Chavis 1986 p10). This opposition has been seen as central in defining a community, to the extent that ‘the boundary encapsulates the identity of the community’ (Cohen, 1985 p12). Administrative or physical boundaries may delimit some communities, but Cohen argues that symbolic aspects of community boundaries are the most crucial in understanding perceptions of community membership, and points out that ‘the boundary may be perceived in rather

different terms, not only by people on opposite sides of it, but also by people on the same side.'

Thus, community boundaries have long been recognised to be social constructs, which depend on shared perceptions of symbolic meaning, but which will also include some degree of within-group diversity. Nevertheless, recent research highlights that a pervasive 'monolithic' view of communities still exists, that sometimes fails to account for the extent to which a sense of community varies between members and stresses 'the need to reconcile the range of shared and unique attributes' of members (Sexton et al 2018 p143).

The concept of community is central to any understanding of the 'speech community'. A speech community, like any other community, is formed through a process of socialisation, a process of learning whereby any member of a group learns to interpret signs and symbolic meaning in society, which includes the appropriate meaning of language. We learn to talk and to interpret the meaning of language within societies and cultures, and the cultural norms thus acquired can be considered to define the speech community. Gumperz defined a speech community as 'any human aggregate characterized by regular and frequent interaction over a significant span of time' (Gumperz 2009 p 66). Agreed social meanings are emphasised rather than common patterns of usage. 'Regardless of the linguistic differences among them, the speech varieties employed within a speech community form a system because they are related to a 'shared set of social norms' (Gumperz 2009 p 67). Labov also emphasised shared norms in his concept of the speech community. 'The speech community is not defined by any marked agreement in the use of language elements, so much as by participation in a set of shared norms: these norms may be observed in overt types of evaluative behavior' Labov (1972 p 120–1). This set of norms, however, does not necessarily result in homogenous language behaviour.

Patrick takes the view that 'individual motivations and orientations to identity' are of importance. Individuals 'may draw in creative and contradictory ways on the shared resources available to them. Nevertheless, there are a few general and powerful norms, and recognizable linguistic pathways for bringing them into play' (Patrick, 2002). I consider this perspective to be useful with respect to evaluative judgements, as it allows for both sedimented social meanings of linguistic resources and also individual acts of identity construction in interactions. Coupland (2010 p100) points out that 'indexical

resources are orderly or structural' and as a result of the shared social meaning of variation, people can also 'make sense of other people's performances'. Therefore, the notion of a community underpins speakers' perception of themselves and of others (Hlavak 2019 p 160).

Morgan defines the concept thus: 'Speech communities are groups that share values and attitudes about language use, varieties and practices' (Morgan 2014 p1). That is not to say that these values are a static phenomenon. They are learned as a process of socialisation, and this learning continues throughout our lifetime as the societies and cultures in which we are engaged undergo change. Such cultural change is suggested by sociolinguistic research in the north of England, evidencing changes in language usage in the varieties of the major cities, e.g., Liverpool (Honeybone, 2007) and Newcastle (Watt 2002). Where convergence is occurring, towards less localised pan-regional production, speech community values may also be shifting. Another complication is that an individual is likely to be able to claim more than one membership at any one time. Accordingly, Patrick points out the 'nested' nature of any individual's speech community membership, stating that the speech community 'is 'a multi-levelled concept cutting across the ecology of nested contexts' (Patrick 2008). Furthermore, Morgan (2014 p7) points out that speech communities can exist at different levels of locality and sometimes in virtual spaces. These definitions emphasise speech community memberships as subjective allegiances, which can be important to people. Such *perceptions* of speech community membership are the subject of the present language attitudes study, which investigates evaluation practices among young people in Newcastle towards local and wider regional varieties of speech.

1.4. **Summary**

- This chapter has demonstrated that the north of England is defined principally in contrast with the more prosperous south of England, and that within the north, the north east region is also perceived to be socially and economically disadvantaged.
- Northern speech is a signifier of identity, both ascribed and adopted, often associated with characterological figures which are widely prevalent in the culture.

- Within the north, distinctive speech communities are also culturally prominent, often associated with city locations.
- The north-east, despite its commonly attested regional distinctiveness is a divided region, which is also perceived to be differentiated linguistically within the area.
- The image of the north east, which has become subject to commodification, masks heterogeneity within the population.

This chapter gave an account of cultural factors, including historical, literary, educational, economic, political and geographical aspects, influencing perceptions of the varieties of English spoken in the north of England. In particular, the perception of speakers of varieties of English as 'other' was seen to be fundamental to stereotypes existing in the culture. The research presented in chapter 1 showed that popular culture, literature, and political discourse have all contributed to the enregisterment of established stereotypes of the north and northern ways of speaking. This thesis will give evidence of the extent to which these perceptions continue to influence evaluations and impressions of speakers, focussing on attitudes, stereotypes and ingroup belonging in responses to local and wider regional varieties of speech. Chapter 2 turns to theoretical explanations for the structure of such stereotypes, the construction of group memberships, and the processes involved in responding to varieties of speech.

Chapter 2: **The social meaning of linguistic variation: conceptual frameworks**

Overview

The study aims to examine perception amongst a specific participant group, of speech community membership, which, this chapter proposes, entails the core concepts of *self-classification, attitudes, stereotypes* and *ideology*. These theoretical concepts originate from different fields, including sociology, anthropology and social psychology, with the result that related ideas are found in different frameworks, highlight different viewpoints and sometimes are described using different terminology. Some of the background to the concepts will be given in order to define their meanings, demonstrate important connections between them, clarify related terminology, and to identify and integrate useful frameworks for the present study. The chapter clarifies two positions taken in this research. Firstly, speaker evaluations in the language attitude tradition are not incompatible with a constructivist view of attitudes. Secondly, responses to varieties of speech are important indicators of language ideological structures.

2.1. **Language attitudes**

2.1.1. The importance of folklinguisic study

Historically, linguistic attention to speech community membership was chiefly a dialectological concern. Study of language varieties had traditionally focused exclusively on defining the features that characterised each variety, excluding social meaning from consideration (Lee 1992). The relevance of non-expert beliefs, attitudes, and opinions (see section 2.2.3 for definition of these related terms) has not always been recognised. Hoenigswald (1966) is credited with being the earliest proponent of folklinguistics as a subfield of linguistics. Hoenigswald proposed that ‘we should be interested not only in (a) what goes on (language), but also in (b) how people react to what goes on (they are persuaded, they are put off, etc.) and in (c) what people say goes on (talk concerning language). (Hoenigswald 1966: p20). It should be noted, the term ‘folk’ is not intended to imply tradition or rusticity, as suggested, for instance by ‘folk dancing’. People in general are the ‘folk’ in folklinguistics, a term which is intended to refer to any person who does not have training in language science. However, as Paveau points out, the

distinction between ‘expert’ and ‘non- expert’, is non-discrete, as a range of different linguistic identities lie between the two poles of specialist linguists and ordinary speakers (Paveau, 2011 p52).

Preston notably used Hoenigswald’s three proposals to develop his model (shown in Figure 2-1) of the place of folklinguistics in the general study of language (Preston 1999, Niedzielski and Preston 2000), particularly focussing on metalinguistic commentaries about varieties of speech (part (c) in Hoenigswald’s proposal), but also considering the context of broader forces that influence them.

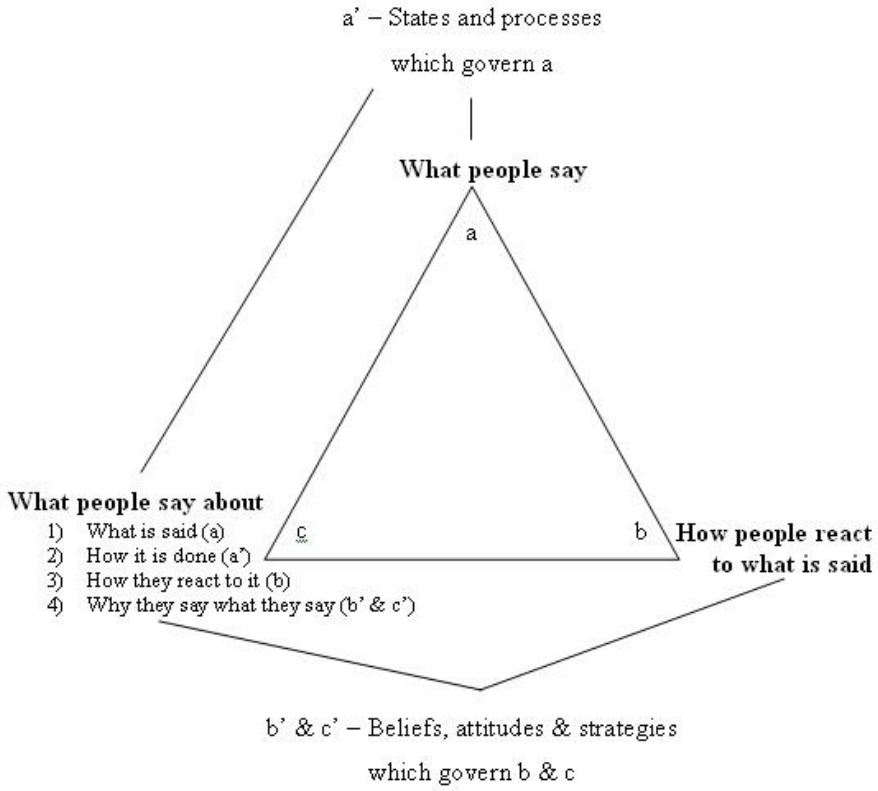

Figure 2-1 The place of folklinguistics in the general study of language (reproduced from Niedzielski and Preston (2000))

The three inner points of the triangle represent measurable aspects of language study. The addition of the a’, b’ and c’ markings in an outer layer are interpretations of the social meanings ‘lurking behind’ language use and responses to it (Preston 1999 p xxiii). Preston holds the view that “folk information about language . . . is essential to the

sociolinguistic research enterprise" (Preston, 1993, p. 182), suggesting that dispositions towards dialectal diversity are not only interesting in their own right, but may give insight into language change. Particularly relevant in the present study, is Albury's supposition that 'Their dispositions may even serve as windows to a community's language ideology' (Albury 2014 p87).

Although Preston's notion of folklinguistics originally focussed on the sub-branch of perceptual dialectology (Preston 1999 p xxiv), he later advocated a broader conceptualisation of the term which is inclusive of language attitudes.

> 'I will conceive of folk linguistics broadly here, including not only the comments that nonlinguists make about linguistic topics but also the reactions they have to varieties of language and language use, including overt as well as subconscious responses. In other words, findings from the social psychology of language (i.e. attitude studies) are taken to be a part of folk linguistics' (Preston, 2011 p17).

Indeed, it has been argued that the traditions of language attitude research are the most established in the field of folklinguistics (McKenzie 2015a) as public perceptions of linguistic variation have been the subject of a considerable body of influential work in this area since the 1960s. The folklinguistic approach taken in the present study explores responses to speech as an indication of beliefs, attitudes and social ideologies influencing perceptions of speakers.

2.1.2. What are language attitudes?

The researcher takes the view in this thesis that in order to approach the core concerns which gave rise to the research questions, an integrative approach to the study of language attitudes is not only possible but is required. The following sections attempt to bring together the following seemingly contradictory understandings of the concept of language attitudes.

- Language attitudes as sedimented evaluative structures held by the person and shared by the group
- Language attitudes as indicators of ideological systems of often taken-for granted societally held belief and values.
- Language attitudes as evaluative actions constructing, upholding and resisting such schema of social meanings.

People make judgements of others according to the way they speak, and these judgements have consequences for individuals in diverse domains. In the north of England, as detailed in chapter one, many people associate speaking with a regional accent with images of the north that are pervasive in society, causing them to judge speakers in accordance with stereotypes of essentialised characterological figures. Such judgements result from language attitudes, a concept deriving from social psychology.

According to Garrett (2010 p1), 'Language attitudes permeate our daily lives', upholding a longstanding view of the importance of attitudes, described by Allport as an 'indispensable concept' (Allport 1935 p798). The precise nature of the attitude concept, however, has not been unambiguous, with several researchers arriving at their own definitions of the term, depending to some extent on their particular research purposes (Agheyeshi and Fishman 1970). Central to all definitions is the concept of the attitudinal object to which a person responds. The working definition that informs the present study, is that *language attitudes are evaluative social practices that attribute social meaning to the language use of others*.

In order to arrive at this definition, I have considered previous attempts to define the attitude concept. Most researchers adopt a mentalist view of attitudes (see Figure 2-2), which holds that they are a psychological construct with a multi-component structure (Agheyisi, and Fishman 1970 p 138-9). It is widely agreed that there are three of these components: cognitive, affective, behavioural components and that together they form the basis for the higher level of abstraction i.e. the attitude (Rosenberg and Hovland 1960, Ostrom 1968, Breckler 1984).

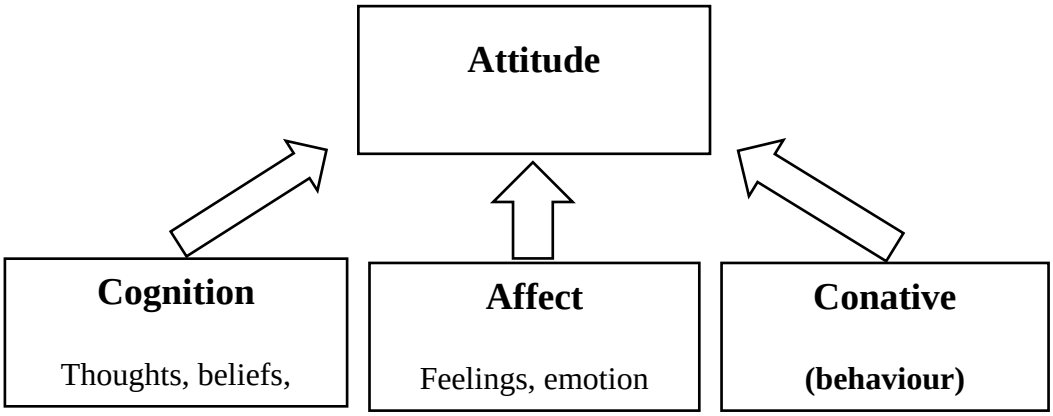

Figure 2-2 The structure of attitudes (adapted from Baker, 1992 p 177)

The first of these components, *affect,* relates to emotions or feelings. The *cognitive* component relates to thoughts and beliefs. *Behaviour* relates both to actions and to intentions to act. Definitions of the concept of attitude differ from each other depending on the importance afforded to the components. There is general agreement that attitudes are evaluative (e.g. Katz,1960 p168; Eagly and Chaiken 1993 p 1; Bohne and Wanke 2002 p 16), although affect has also been emphasised (e.g. Thurstone (1931, p 261). Favourable and unfavourable responses are suggested in all of these definitions. Traditionally, attitudes are also considered to be relatively stable dispositions towards the attitude object (Katz 1960; Azjen, 1988 p4). As such, they can be inferred only indirectly through observation of responses. Allport (1954) stressed the learned rather than inherent nature of attitudes. Considering the above discussion an attitude therefore, is:

- Generally agreed to be evaluative
- Recognised as a psychological construct which cannot be observed directly
- Considered to be a disposition or tendency, which suggests some degree of consistency in attitudes
- Believed to be learned, which suggests that attitudes can be influenced by experience.

In summary, attitudes are understood to be evaluative orientations towards an attitude object influencing reactions.

In the speaker evaluation paradigm, language attitudes have been theorised as a relatively stable evaluative psychological tendency, an assumption that underlies the traditional matched guise technique used to measure the attitude. Underpinning these considerations is an understanding of attitudes which has been described as the *file drawer model* (Bohne and Wanke 2002 p5). A learned attitude is similar to a file which can be withdrawn from the mind in order to evaluate an attitude object. However, an opposing view uses an *attitude-as-construction* model to suggest that attitudes are context dependent and created according to the circumstances. Constructivist views of language attitudes focus on more transient expressions of attitudinal positions in situated interactional practice (e.g. Potter and Wetherell 1987. In an attempt to define attitudes more holistically, Giles &Marlow (2011) produced an integrated model of language attitudes in which the *sense- making* processes are central to all stages of the model. Similarly, in the REACT framework devised by Purschke (2015), attitudes are seen as constructions of meanings which are contextually situated. However, these responses are laid down in memory, and can be drawn upon to inform future occasions, which with repetition, become sedimented as *evaluation routines*. This model interprets the attitude concept as a constructed (or reconstructed) evaluative judgement, and therefore understands it in terms of a mental process, rather than a mental state. Purschke argues that the attitude is therefore an *action*. Purschke's view of attitudes as 'evaluative routines in social practices' seems particularly useful to the present study, where I conceive of responses to local ways of speaking as actions, connecting to or distancing from speakers.

Having ascertained that despite the complexity involved in defining the concept of attitude, some key features can generally be agreed, it might be helpful to clarify the meanings of some other terms related to the concept.

2.1.3. Concepts related to attitudes: beliefs, values, habits, opinions, ideology, stereotypes

The term 'attitude' and other related concepts can cause some confusion, not least because the terminology used in their definition parallels terms which are sometimes used synonymously in everyday use. Some of the concepts differ depending on whether they are internal individual constructs or societal shared constructs.

2.1.3.1. ***Individual constructs***

Oppenheim (1992 p 177) distinguishes between attitudes and related concepts in terms of superficiality, stability and specificity. The tree model (Figure 2-3) shows a hierarchy between relatively stable personality traits and less consistent opinions.

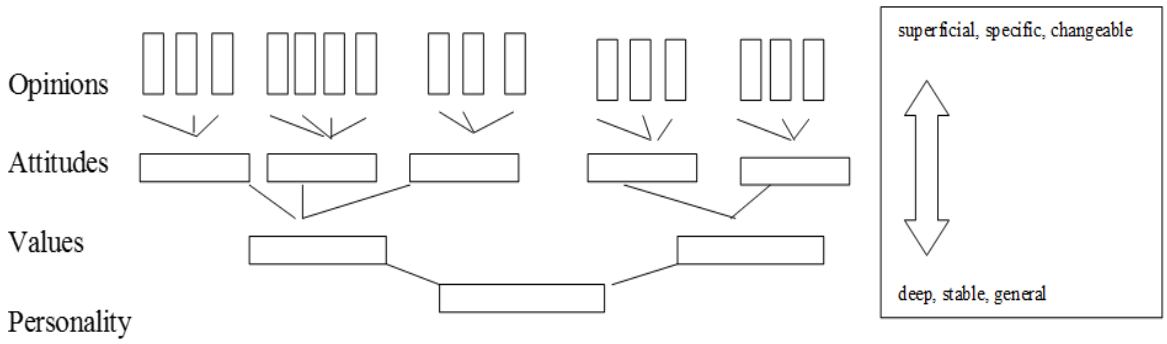

Figure 2-3 Tree model of attitudes adapted from Oppenheim 1992 p 177

For clarification, I draw on distinctions made by Garrett (2010 p 31-32) between some of these meanings and the concept of attitude.

Opinions have been equated with the cognitive component of attitudes. The distinction here is that opinions can be verbalised, whereas an attitude may be latent. 'The concept "opinion" will here mean a verbal expression of attitude' (Thurstone 1928 p 531). However, an individual may give a verbal opinion which contradicts the underlying attitude (Baker 1992 p 14). This has implications for methods of elicitation, if opinions are sought, as people will in some circumstances give responses which they think are socially acceptable rather than risk incurring disapproval.

Beliefs have also been equated with the cognitive component of an attitude. According to the tripartite model of attitudes, beliefs are one of the components, and as such are inextricably linked to an attitude. According to Eagly and Chaiken (1998 p274), 'attitudes are assumed to reflect the beliefs that people hold about attitude objects.

Values are closely linked to beliefs. They operate at a higher level of abstraction than attitudes and are more general, whereas an attitude is likely to be more specific. An attitude reflects degrees of favourability towards the attitudinal object, whereas values are principles in life. Values are seen to represent standards or goals (Oskamp 1991). General

values, which represent idealised goals, exert influence over attitudes, but may result in a variety of attitudes.

Values can be classified as *terminal values***,** such as equality, or *instrumental values,* such as ambition (Rokeach 1973). These values were assumed to be guiding principles in life, and therefore closely allied to beliefs and attitudes. The influencing effect of both of these classes of values on attitudes is relevant to the present study. For instance, values such as equality may underpin attitudes to varieties of speech. Some individuals may hold values that every speaker should be regarded as equal, regardless of their variety of speech, resulting in tolerance of varieties and attitudes which do not show favour to particular varieties. The instrumental value of ambition could influence attitudes towards a local variety of speech if such a way of speaking is believed to be an impediment to social mobility. In the school context of the present study, the values of equality and ambition are both actively promoted.

Habits are learned, relatively stable and enduring, but are behaviours, (Garrett 2010 p 31), which although they may be indicative of attitudes, differ significantly from them, in that they are not evaluative (Oskamp 1991).

2.1.3.2. ***Societal constructs***

Ideology is very closely related to value but differs from the other terms as it represents a societal as opposed to an individual construct. Ideology explains and naturalises the status quo, removing uncertainty. It is a set of assumptions and values. a system of beliefs which may be *taken for granted* as common sense in a society and underpins attitudes towards groups. Of particular relevance in this study is the concept of a standard language ideology, a taken-for-granted set of societally held beliefs which underlies supposedly common-sense attitudes towards varieties of speech. (See section 2.5.1 for detail). In a school setting, an example of this would be an assumption that there is a correct 'best' form of language which can be taught, and to which individuals might aspire. Another pertinent ideological construct is that educational achievement is a legitimate means for social mobility, which can be accessed by hard work.

Stereotypes are another set of societally shared beliefs but relate more directly to groups and their members. Through stereotypes, groups can be categorised as possessing certain expected characteristics (Stangor 1995 p 628). This concept will be further

explored in section 2.3, specifically in relation to how two dimensions in person perception predict particular stereotypes and consequent prejudices.

As attitudes are closely related, but distinguishable from some of the related concepts and as the concerns of the study include beliefs, values, ideology, and stereotypes, it is necessary to establish a framework for analysis that can address all of these concerns.

2.1.4. Language regard

Preston (2010,2011, 2017) developed the term 'language regard' to attempt an inclusive definition which gathers together all approaches to investigation of the responses of non-linguists to language, comprising several related concepts. This seemed a useful starting point to establish a theoretical framework to approach the thesis, as it highlights both responses to language and broader societal influences.

While the terms have considerable overlap, Preston prefers 'regard' above 'attitude,' as the scope of his new term is not restricted to evaluation, offering a broader umbrella term which covers all study of non-linguists' perceptions of language variation. "since some folk linguistics beliefs are not necessarily evaluative, and evaluation is taken to be a necessary component of attitude" (2011b, p.10).

Although, as shown in figure 2.2, beliefs and thoughts form the cognitive component of the attitude construct, Preston holds that 'regard' encompasses a wider range of non-linguist's perceptions of, beliefs about, and responses to, language and varieties. Regard is therefore seen to be a higher order concept, of which attitude is a sub-concept. The model allowed Preston to place speaker-evaluation attitudes studies alongside perceptual dialectology approaches, including beliefs about geographical boundaries delimiting areas where language variation is found.

More importantly for the present study, concepts such as ideology, which might be conceived as higher order concepts influencing attitudes are also seen to be a sub concept of the overarching concept of language regard. Figure 2-4 shows how uses of language, responses to language and talk about language all operate within a context of broader social forces which influence them. It offers a useful starting point to consider where the present study makes a contribution to knowledge about language and social identification, as it takes into account interpretations of the social meanings 'lurking behind' (Preston 1999 p xxiii) language use and responses to it.

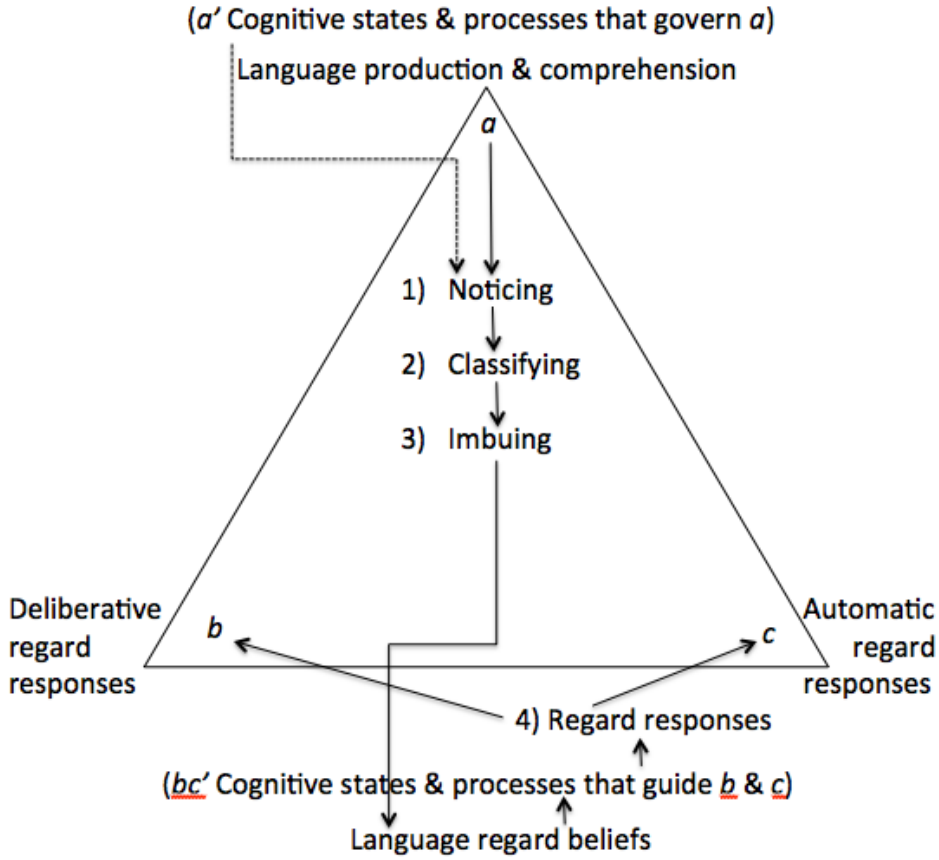

Figure 2-4 Preston's procedural account of language regard: production, classifying, imbuing and responding (adapted from Preston 2017)

Preston's model differentiates between 'deliberative' and 'automatic' regard responses, Deliberative regard responses articulate conscious thought, which operates above the level of awareness and is available for comment. Such regard responses can be elicited directly. Automatic regard responses may operate below the level of awareness, occur spontaneously, and are elicited indirectly.

Further, Preston attempts to use his model to account for the cognitive processes whereby meaning is attributed to language, such as language attention, discrimination, noticing, attribution, group assignment, and including processing and comprehension. The process is described as a sequence of four steps, adapted here to provide an example relevant in a north of England context:

Step 1: A speaker of Newcastle English produces an [u:] in the word "town", an instance of production at "*a*."

Step *2:* The hearer *classifies* this at point "*a*" as "Geordie."

Step *3:* The hearer retrieves caricatures of "Geordies" from their cultural belief system and imbues fact "*a*" with them, for example that Geordies are thick daft football fanatics who punch police horses.

Step 4: Through *bc',* a hearer has a regard response (at *b* or *c*).

These steps are similar to the four stages that have been identified within the attitude response process: comprehension, retrieval, judgement and reporting (Tourangeau 1992). It may seem, from Preston's model, that the connotations associated with speech at the imbuing stage are predetermined, but at each of these stages, contextual information may influence the reported evaluation. The present study applies a framework for analysis which adopts from language regard consideration of the wider societal ideologies 'lurking behind' evaluative responses, but also recognises the importance of situated context, to which I now turn.

2.1.5. Contextual relevance

Contradictory attitudes may be held at any one time, and the attitude elicited may vary depending on the context at a particular time. This ambiguity does not mean that the attitude is necessarily unstable, but rather the elicitation of the attitude may depend on what part of the attitude is accessible in a particular instance. For example, in one instance, the individual may recall a particular affective liking for an attitudinal object, for example a favourable response to cake, triggered by calling to mind the delicious birthday cake enjoyed at a recent party. On another occasion, cake may invoke a negative cognitive response by calling to mind a recent TV programme about the contribution of sugary food such as cake to the diet, and the harmful impact of obesity on health. Situational relevance influences which attitudes will be triggered.

The terms *salience* and *pertinence,* adopted from Purschke's REACT framework, distinguish between two elements of judgements about phenomena. Both of the terms relate to sequences of cognitive processing, providing useful insight into how situational relevance influences attitudes. *Sailence* is the perception of conspicuous phenomena, which, like noticing in Preston's regard model, means that features must become

conspicuous to the listener. Salience processing categorises the perceptual distinctiveness of a phenomenon with respect to how conspicuous or inconspicuous it is perceived to be. *Pertinence* is an evaluation of the relevance of the phenomena. Listeners attach a specific situational significance to the salient speech phenomena, involving judgements of acceptability and situational significance, such as comprehensibility, familiarity, typicality or appropriateness. These result in a judgement of relevance. Relevant evaluations then become sedimented, contributing to the existing stock of attitudes formed from previous experiences, either by modifying or stabilising them.

Whereas Preston's model appeared to emphasise the influence of ideological values upon attitudes and opinions, the REACT framework more clearly views the process as a two-way interaction. In the present study I adopt the view that evaluative judgement can therefore be seen as a constructive action in a dynamic relationship with the ideological values.

It is also important to consider what functions language attitudes perform in the context. These can be assumed to reflect the categorising and identity-expressive functions attributed to attitudes in general. (Katz, 1960) If speakers' voices are seen to carry social information according to which they can be categorised, then this information must depend on a set of meanings attributed to voice characteristics. These meanings may have personal relevance to a specific listener or be part of a wider social schema. The characteristic I will be looking at is accented speech, which has been shown to index a range of social meanings for listeners and for the speakers themselves. Attitudes to accented speech can serve identity expressive functions in the extent to which a voice is used to signal group membership and social status. The next section looks at how such group membership is formed.

2.2. **Ingroup and outgroup membership**

Baker (1992 p 29) identified eight foci of language attitude research, of which the first, 'attitudes to language variation, dialect and speech style' and the fourth 'attitudes to language groups, communities and minorities' closely relate to the subject of my research, which specifically investigates the social meaning of locally accented speech. The study looks at responses to speakers as an indication of ingroup membership. Attitudes that people express towards language varieties depend on the perceived group memberships

of the speaker and the hearer. Social identity theory helps to explain *why* language attitudes contribute to a 'sense of belonging', which was considered in Chapter 1 to be an essential component in community membership. A further development of the theory, self-categorisation theory, suggests *how* these perceptions of group memberships are activated.

2.2.1. Social identity theory

Group membership is seemingly surprisingly easy to create. The minimal group paradigm suggests that simply categorising a person as belonging to one group or another can influence judgement of other group members, even when these categorisations are randomly allocated and have no other social meaning for the group members. Students who were allocated to a group according to which artist they preferred, Kandinsky or Klee, demonstrated preference for their own group in a coin distribution task (Tajfel et al 1971). However, even where more equal distribution would have resulted in greater rewards for everyone, the participants still shared the coins unfairly in a way that disadvantaged the outgroup.

This finding, that even trivial and irrelevant categorisation resulted in preference for one's own group, led Tajfel and Turner to develop social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner 1979). This theory offered explanation for intergroup behaviour. Social identity theory suggests that an individual's identity comprises both social identity and personal identity, which exist on an interpersonal-intergroup continuum. (Tajfel & Turner 1979). The theory supposes that the groups to which a person feels they belong, known as the *ingroup*, forms part of a person's self-concept, irrespective of individual personality traits. This leads people to define themselves according to the characteristics of the group and to favour their own group over outgroup members. Aspects of the ingroup will be evaluated favourably, and behaviour will also exhibit *ingroup favouritism,* which accounts for the unfairness exhibited in the results of the minimal groups observations. This ingroup favouritism was believed to be prompted simply by individuals categorising themselves as group members. However, competition for resources does not fully account for the findings, which led Tajfel to develop the idea that *positive distinctiveness* and *self-esteem* play an important role in intergroup behaviour.

According to social identity theory, stereotypes are used both for outgroups and ingroups. Individuals will employ self- stereotyping in order to align themselves with a group identity when this can establish self-esteem. The social identity deriving from group

membership leads people to emphasise the differences between one's own group compared with outgroups, establishing positive distinctiveness. Outgroups are also stereotyped as being homogenous (*outgroup homogeneity*). Intergroup relations can be characterised as a struggle for prestige and status (Turner and Tajfel 1979, Hogg and Abrams 1990). Group members achieve a favourable social identity, and consequently higher self-esteem, through positive distinctiveness. Low status group membership will not necessarily result in lower self-esteem for group members as members engage in social creativity strategies. These involve defining the ingroup status according to different success criteria than those of the higher status outgroup. For example, in an experiment where children engaged in a competition to build a beach hut, the group who were given superior building materials were not acknowledged as having achieved better performance by the losing team, who tried to redefine their success by emphasising the superiority of the garden they had made (Lemaine 1974). In a language attitudes context, this positive distinctiveness is shown in evaluations which favour ingroup membership according to traits such as friendliness, even when status criteria are downgraded.

Figure 2-5 illustrates how, for the purposes of the thesis, social identity theory will inform understanding of the relationship between group identity and evaluations of others.

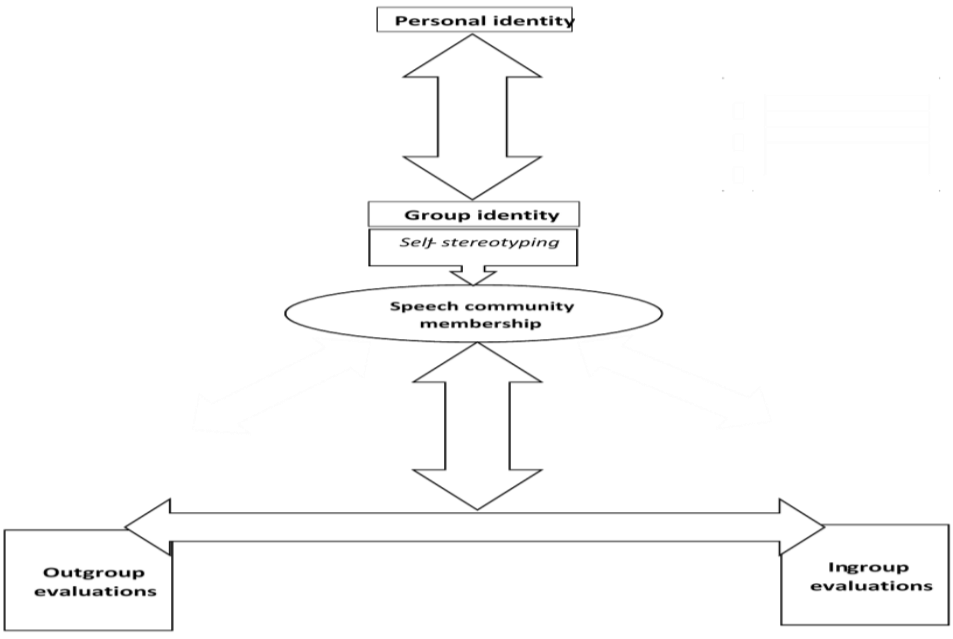

Figure 2-5 The influence of group membership on evaluation of others

In a language attitudes context, group identity is associated with speech community membership. Ingroup and outgoup evaluations in the language attitude context relate to evaluations of speakers of varieties of English. Double-headed arrows between personal and group identity indicate that identification can shift along a cline between the two. Neither are ingroup and outgroup identifications absolute, but also operate on a cline dependent on contextual factors. The double headed arrow between speech community membership and the evaluation cline indicates a mutually reinforcing process, whereby perception of speech community membership influences evaluations, but also shared evaluations consolidate group belonging.

Self-esteem may be enhanced for an individual by identifying at the interpersonal level. Where social mobility is believed to be possible, an individual may hope to move between groups to enhance status. For instance, in a school setting, peer group norms may be resisted by individuals who want to progress to more elite employment, and believe that school success will provide a gateway for progression. On the contrary, where opportunities to enhance self-esteem do not appear to be available to individuals, apart from through collective action to disrupt the status quo, group identity will be preferenced. The theory offers 'powerful explanations of such phenomena as ingroup bias, responses of lower-ranking groups to their unequal status position, and intragroup homogeneity and stereotyping' (Brown 2000). Figure 2-6 illustrates how individuals distance themselves from or connect to others, to form ingroup and outgroup judgements. The model shows how speech community membership allegiance can also be claimed or denied. Shared evaluative norms, which are considered fundamental to speech community membership, are influential in determining ingroup and outgroup assessments of speakers of varieties.

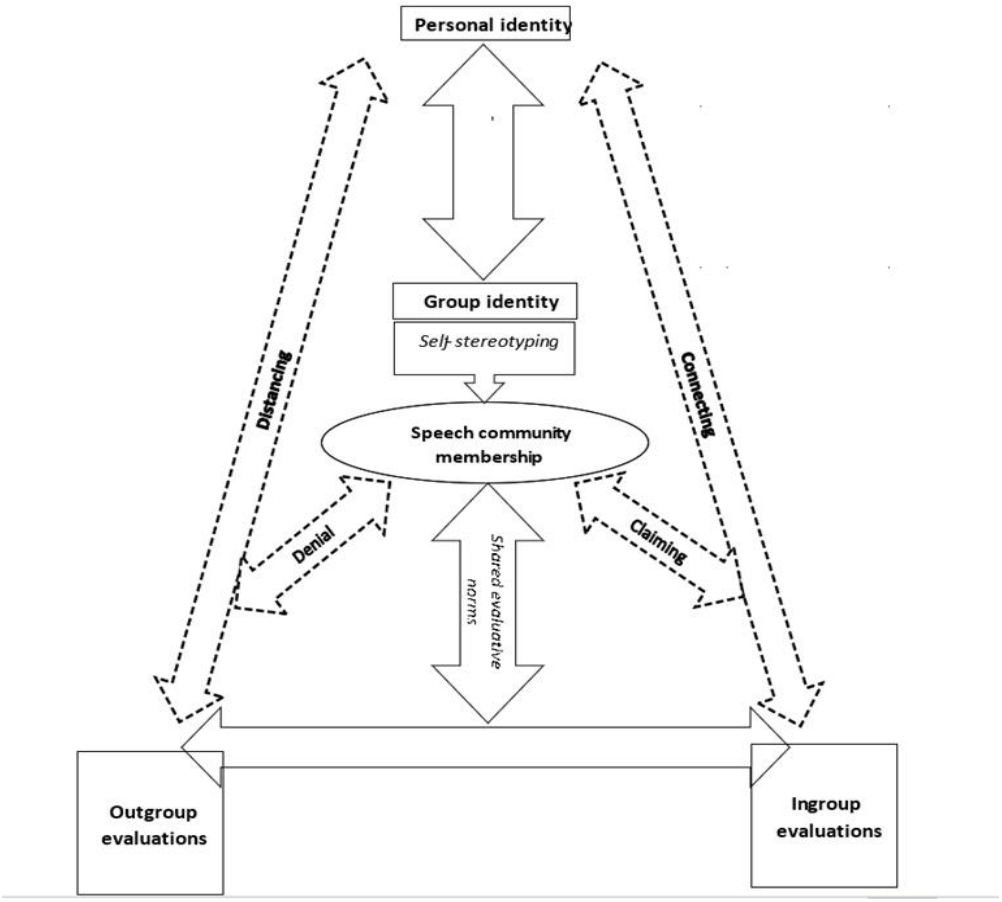

Figure 2-6 The influence of individual identification on evaluations of others

As social identity theory is especially useful in understanding the relationship between ingroups and outgroups, it is particularly appropriate to adopt in the study to account for evaluations of speakers in terms of ingroup or outgroup membership. However, one limitation of the theory was it lacked explanation for the cognitive processes involved in identification. Turner's self-categorisation theory developed the ideas further to try to explain the mechanism at work.

2.2.2. Self-categorisation theory

According to Turner (1982) 'a social group can be usefully conceptualised as a number of individuals who have internalised the same social category membership as a component of their self-concept.' Turner proposed a theory of group behaviour in terms of an 'identity mechanism' to explain movement along the interpersonal–intergroup continuum. He hypothesized that as people defined themselves as members of the same category with others in a group, they would *self-stereotype* in relation to the category.

They would tend to see themselves as more alike in terms of the defining attributes of the category. This process is referred to as *depersonalization.*

Turner developed the idea of the *metacontrast principle* to explain the process by which individuals are categorised as group members. Self- category is not a stored fixed cognitive structure in some mental system waiting to be activated, but is context dependent, and is produced by contrasts or comparison with others. In self-categorisation theory, salience is explained in terms of *'fit,* which has two components: *comparative fit* and *normative fit* (Oakes, 1987). A person has individual and group identities. The identity that comes into play in any given context is the one that has the best fit, i.e., is salient, in that context. Perceived similarity or difference with ingroup characteristics, or 'normative fit' describes how group members are perceived to be part of a group depending on whether or not their characteristics are perceived to be in keeping with norms for group membership. Perceived distinctiveness from outgroups, is 'comparative fit', which explains how a person may be claimed for the ingroup if the differences between them and other ingroup members is seen to be less than that between the person and outgroup members. Therefore, someone's salient identity changes depending on the situation, as the degree of relative fit will vary in different contexts. The knowledge about the self that is used as a resource in determining the fit of characteristics is relatively enduring but may also shift as a result of the process of categorisation. (Turner and Reynolds, 2011). The self-category, therefore, is not a static phenomenon, but is formed in a dynamic process. This understanding of self-categorisation is adopted in the thesis, where language attitudes are understood to be listeners' acts of positioning in relation to speakers. The dynamic nature of this process is indicated by the double-headed arrow in Figure 2-7.

Figure 2-7 Self-stereotyping

These theories explain how language attitudes serve identity functions for people and can signal group membership. Self-stereotyping, in-group stereotypes and outgroup stereotypes were accounted for in terms of these functions. The next section looks at a theory of stereotyping that explores how socio-structural attributes give rise to different kinds of outgroup stereotype.

2.3. **Stereotypes and the 'big 2' dimensions of evaluation.**

Stereotyping acts as a simplifying mechanism in perception of information (Fiske & Taylor, 1991), which categorises characteristics of groups of people stored in the memory. Hence, it serves a useful purpose in the cognitive processing of stimuli. However, stereotyping may give rise to prejudice or discrimination.

Social psychological research into how people form impressions of others have suggested two fundamental dimensions of social perception and judgement, known as the 'Big Two' (Abele and Wojciszke (2013). The most common labels used to indicate these dimensions are warmth/communion and competence/agency (e.g., Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2008; Abele & Bruckmüller, 2013, 2014). Perceived competence includes such traits as capability and assertiveness and is associated with status. Perceived warmth includes such traits as trustworthiness and friendliness, and is associated with co-operation (Fiske,S 2018). Of these, warmth is thought to be the primary dimension, distinguishing intentions of the 'other' towards us, identifying 'friend or foe'. Secondary to this, the 'competence' dimension distinguishes whether the 'other' has the capability of enacting these intentions (Fiske 2018). Combinations of the structural attributes of status and interdependence (co-operative or competitive) are predictors of group stereotypes (Cuddy et al 2014).

The stereotype content model predicts four stereotypes in interpersonal relationships, identified in bold type in Figure 2-8. These in turn predict emotional prejudices towards groups, in italic type in Figure 2-8 (Fiske et al., 2002).

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Warmth (co-operative rather than competitive)</td><td></td><td>high</td><td>Paternalistic stereotype
Pity
Low status, not competitive
(e.g. elderly, disabled)</td><td>Admiration
Pride
High status, not competitive
(e.g ingroup, close allies)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>low</td><td>Contemptuous stereotype
Scorn , disgust
Low status, competitive
(e.g.drug addict, poor people)</td><td>Envious stereotype
Envy
High status, competitive
(e.g. rich people)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td rowspan="2"></td><td>low</td><td>high</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Competence (high status relative to low status)</td></tr>
</table>

Figure 2-8 The four stereotypes identified by the stereotype content model. Adapted from Fiske Cuddy Glick and Xu (2002).

It should be noted that the examples of groups given in each quadrant are taken from USA studies. Although the model has been generalised across nearly 50 countries, profiles of particular ethnic stereotypes are culture-specific (Grigoryev et al 2019).

Warmth is attributed to groups that are generally seen as cooperative rather than competitive, whereas attributions of competence are reserved for high-status relative to low-status groups. Crossing the warmth and competence dimensions yields four broad classes of stereotypes and predicts specific corresponding emotions. Groups that are seen as both cooperative and high status – and therefore warm and competent (e.g., Christians, middle class) elicit emotions like pride and admiration. Groups that are seen as competitive (for resources) and low status stimulate disgust and scorn (e.g., drug addicts, welfare recipients). The two "off-diagonal" classes provoke ambivalent emotions: cooperative but low-status groups (e.g., elderly, disabled) are seen as warm but incompetent and, thus, trigger pity. Competitive but admittedly high-status groups (e.g., rich people, Asians, and other model minorities) may be respected but disliked, activating emotions like envy. Durante et al (2010) found this association is bi-directional, i.e., it is possible to deduce status 'backwards' from competence perception, making the model

potentially useful to interpret structural associations of trait descriptors in language attitude study.

However, one criticism of the SCM has been that participants are generally asked to evaluate groups on warmth and competence traits selected a priori, but there is little evidence of the spontaneous use of the dimensions in stereotyping (Koch et al 2016). Evidence from the re-analysis of 100 adjectives used in prior stereotyping studies found that 60% of traits were categorised according to the two dimensions: 17 were categorised as warmth traits, 33 as competence traits and 34 as neither. (Cuddy et al, 2008). Higher levels of fit were found by Wojciszke (2005) who used the terms *competence* and *morality* to describe the two evaluative dimensions, finding they accounted for 75-82% of impressions recorded by participants. Therefore, the present study offers an opportunity to extend the use of the stereotype content model to interpret the results of a free-chosen word association task.

Figure 2-9 illustrates how the stereotype content model may give more detailed understanding of the outcomes of evaluations. Not only does person perception result in ingroup and outgroup identifications, but these give rise to four specific stereotypes, of which admiration is an ingrouping response, but outgrouping responses are distinguished between pity, scorn and envy stereotypes. The double-headed arrow again indicates reciprocity, as existing stereotypes in the culture influence formation of perceptions.

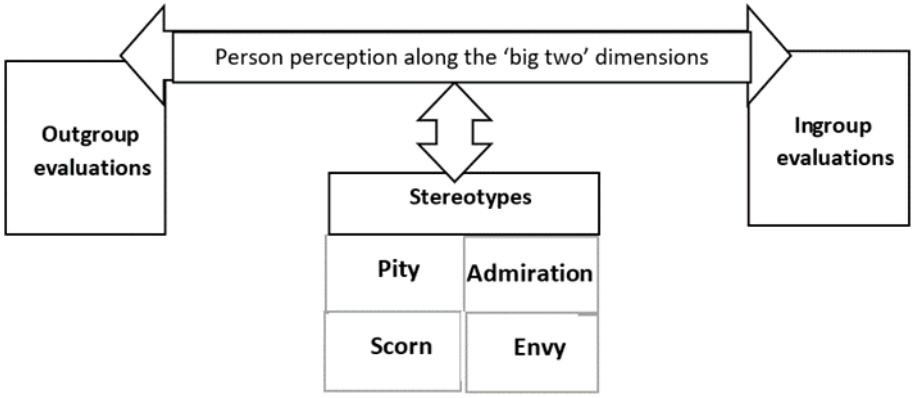

Figure 2-9 The influence of the 'big two' dimensions on evaluations of speakers

2.3.1. Terms used to describe the 'big 2' dimensions in language attitude study

A considerable body of research over several decades, in countries worldwide and in different domains attests to the prevalence of a similar two dimensions in the measurement of language attitudes (Giles and Billings, 2004). I take the view that the dimensions of warmth and competence identified in the stereotype content model are sufficiently conceptually parallel to those identified in previous language attitudes research, to usefully integrate the model into analysis of language attitudes data. Fuertes et al (2012, p. 122) categorise the two dimensions in previous language attitudes work as, 'the competence–solidarity division — which can now, arguably, be seen as a precursor to the competence versus warmth dichotomy inherent in the stereotype content model', highlighting the similarities between the concepts in these two areas of work. In the present study, which uses the speaker-evaluation methods common in language attitudes research, it would seem most appropriate to adopt terminology which is familiar within that tradition. Previous language attitudes research has, however, used inconsistent terms to label the 'big two' dimensions. Preston uses the terms 'correct' and 'pleasant' in perceptual dialectology work, where people identify on a map the areas where such types of English would be found. Research using speaker-evaluation has frequently referred to the two dimensions as 'status' and either 'solidarity', or 'social attractiveness'. For the purpose of their meta-analysis, Fuertes et al seemingly regard different terms as interchangeable; 'competence (or status) on the one hand and solidarity (or social attractiveness) on the other' (Fuertes et al 2012, p. 122.)

Characteristic traits associated with the competence dimension include competent, intelligent, skilled, efficient as well as assertive, confident (Fiske 2018). In the SCM, competence predicts status, and vice- versa (Durante et al, 2010), but as 'status' is the term most used in the tradition of language attitudes study, it was selected as the more appropriate descriptor for the purposes of the present study. Additionally, Milroy (2001 b p 58), has suggested that notions of class are more relevant to judgements of speech in the UK, than in America. Thus, the 'status' category is considered particularly apt in the study of the perceived prestige of accented speech in a UK setting.

Warmth items include warm, trustworthy, friendly, honest, likable, sincere (Fiske 2018). These traits have commonly been categorised as 'solidarity' traits in language attitudes study, related to feelings of affiliation with the speaker (e.g., Ryan, Giles and Sebastian 1982). Although the term has been used synonymously with 'social attractiveness' in the

speaker-evaluation literature, I consider the latter to be a more appropriate descriptor. 'Solidarity' indicates the social identity function that a language variety may serve for the listener (Giles and Rakic, 2014) whereas 'social attractiveness' more directly describes characteristics attributable to speakers, Therefore, for the purposes of the present study, I will use the terms status and social attractiveness in my own discussions but may refer to the concepts in previous works using the terms used by their respective authors. The status dimension includes ideas of social rank, such as prestige, power, and wealth as well as personal attributes such as competence and intelligence. The social attractiveness dimension refers to such traits as warmth, friendliness, trustworthiness, and kindness.

Judgement along these dimensions seems to be predicted by whether a language variety is deemed to be 'standard' or 'non-standard' (further discussion in section 2.5). Positive responses are generally given to standard languages or varieties along status dimensions, whereas non-standard varieties and their speakers may elicit positive responses in terms of social attractiveness.

Overall, this section has shown that judgements along two distinct evaluative dimensions give rise to ingroup and outgroup stereotypes in which perceived lack of prestige can be compensated by perceived warmth. It was suggested that the stereotype content model, alongside language regard and social identity theory, offers a potentially useful framework to investigate the structure of contemporary language attitudes.

2.4. **Shared group norms and stereotypes**

If, as Chapter 1 suggests, particularly culturally embedded stereotypes exist of the north of England, and if, as the theories outlined in this chapter indicate, such cultural associations influence the impressions listeners form of speakers, then the mutability of these schema is an important consideration when seeking up-to-date attitudinal data. Chapter 1 suggested that not only are associations of the north, its people and their ways of speaking associated with widely held cultural assumptions, but also, these are maintained through speaker performances and evaluations. Figure 2-10 illustrates how the interaction can be seen as a two-way process., whereby habitual judgements of speakers also reinforce cultural assumptions.

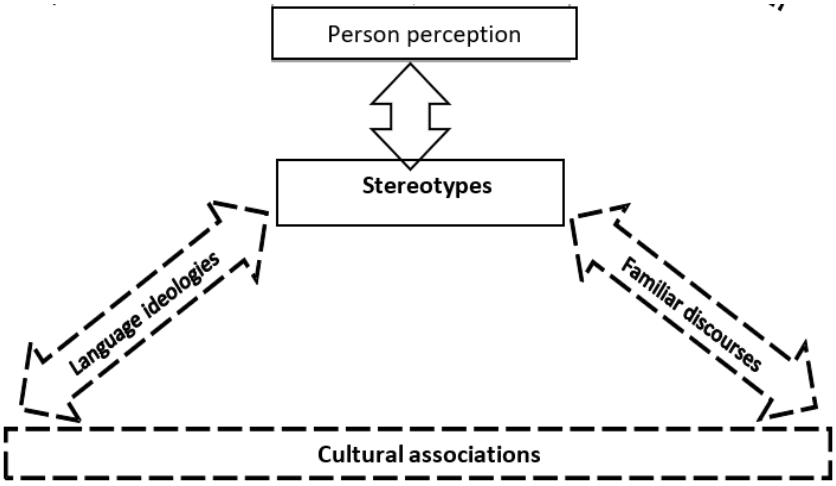

Figure 2-10 The influence of cultural associations on speaker evaluations

This section briefly outlines three processes by which language varieties become imbued with social significance, considering the degree to which connections between vocal cues and evaluative judgements can still change once they have become routinised.

Three concepts drawn from anthropology have been highly influential in sociolinguistics in explaining how social meaning becomes associated with aspects of speech. Indexicality (Silverstein, 2003) explains how repeated experience of co-occurrence between signified and signifier results in the two being indexed. Enregisterment (Agha 2003) is a process by which indexed meanings become established and shared, and to some extent persist. Iconisation (Irvine and Gal 2000) refers to the process by which a selection of enregistered signifiers become representative of an essentialised stereotype, which can be established as an iconic representation.

2.4.1. Indexicality

Language attitudes suggest that people make judgements of others based on the way that they speak. These judgements draw upon social meanings signified by the language variety, which are established through *indexicality.*

The process starts when a linguistic form becomes associated with values. This can happen through correlation of certain linguistic features with social characteristics of users. These correlations are first order (or nth order) of indexicality. In this order of indexicality, characteristics of Geordie speech may have become associated with social information, such as geographic provenance, i.e., a speaker using a Geordie variety of speech is recognisably from Newcastle. Also, other social indexicality may characterise the speaker, such as working class. At the second order (n +1st index) the characteristic is

available for manipulation. For instance, a user of the Geordie variety has an awareness of the first order meaning associated with class, and may avoid certain forms in some contexts, such as job interviews. In other contexts, a speaker may want to highlight their local speech, for instance at the football match. The indexical order is not a single linear progression, as the social meanings are in a continuous state of re-interpretation. Through performances by individuals, speech signals may become correlated with new and different semiotic meanings, and so become indexed again at nth order.

2.4.2. Enregisterment

Closely related to indexicality, the concept of enregisterment has been a very influential idea in sociolinguistics. It is agreed by sociolinguists that different varieties of speech do not have inherent value, but valoration is socially determined. The term enregisterment means 'processes through which a linguistic repertoire becomes differentiable within a language as a socially recognized register of forms' (Agha 2003 p 231). Enregisterment therefore explains how certain varieties of speech come to be characterised as having different values in society. Agha sees language as one among many cultural forms that are ascribed values by discursive practices, some of which are circulated widely enough in society to become a recognised schema. Differences in ways of speaking then become socially recognised as typical of speakers from a certain place or social identity. Enregisterment occurs when

> ' a repertoire of speech forms is widely recognized or enregistered as indexing the same "social voice" by many language users. In such cases we have a social regularity of typification—a system of metapragmatic stereotypes—whereby a given form, or repertoire of forms, is regularly treated as indexical of a social type by a given social domain of persons' (Agha 2005 p 45).

Not only is social value not inherent, but also it is not static. Interactions involve 'operations of alignment' that can result in reproduction or transformation of these schemes (Agha, 2003 p 270). Agha uses the terms 'footing' and 'alignment' to describe how a listener's response to a speaker positions them in relationship with the 'social types of person' imagined to be associated with the enregistered voice.:

> 'Encounters with registers are not merely encounters with voices (or characterological figures and personae) but encounters in which individuals establish forms of footing and alignment with voices indexed by speech and thus

with social types of persons, real or imagined, whose voices they take them to be' (Agha 2005 p 38).

In the present study, then, the listener is considered to be establishing such a footing with the types of persons imagined in response to the voices heard on the speech stimulus. Favour and disfavor, or attitudes, can be interpreted as alignments with the speaker, and are interpreted in the present study in terms of distancing from and connecting to the speaker.

2.4.3. Iconisation, Recursivity and Erasure

Irvine and Gal identify three processes by which language is characterised in societies. These processes describe how prevailing ideologies influence the cultural representation of language

- Iconisation is the process by which certain language features come to be seen as iconic representative signifiers of a social group, to the extent that they seem to characterise the essence of the group.
- Fractal recursivity is how a set of relative values operating to differentiate between group members can be projected onto another group or subgroup.
- Erasure occurs when practices that do not fit into the established schema are ignored. Ideology then renders certain sociolinguistic phenomena invisible.

Indexicality appears to be a prerequisite for iconisation, as the process is described as being 'a transformation of the sign relationship between linguistic features (or varieties) and the social image with which they are linked'(Irvine and Gal 2000 p.37) suggesting a pre-existing association between the two.

Johnstone (2009, 2010) draws on these concepts to inform research into the development of an iconised variety 'Pittsburghese' which is popularly agreed to exist as a distinctive way of speaking and has become commodified, appearing on artefacts such as t-shirts and mugs. Specific forms that may have been noticed by a hearer become enregistered when they are linked with a register, i.e., association with a social identity, such as being from Pittsburgh. This meaning can evolve through orders of indexicality, to signal further associations, or second-order indexicality, such as working class, incorrectness, or lack of education. However, indexicality is a mutable process, and Johnstone suggests that the indexical meanings of Pittsburghese speech have shifted towards expressing local identity

and authenticity. The representations of Pittsburghese that appear on t-shirts, stickers etc serve to strengthen the third order indexicality of the local identity, although they may not reflect actual speech patterns in the area.

Similarly, in Newcastle, Beal (2009), examined historical documents, revealing how awareness of a distinctive urban voice, the 'Geordie' accent became indexed and enregistered through dialect dictionaries, which enregister forms by claiming them as distinctive. The resulting established repertoire of 'Geordie' features became essential to the 'Geordie brand' discussed in Chapter 1.

The first chapter of this thesis painted a picture of widely shared cultural connotations associated with the north of England, and the concept of indexicality outlined in this section accounts both for how variant linguistic forms became associated with localities, and also how stereotypes of social groups have become connected with them. The classifying stage of Preston's regard model draws on indexed social meanings of speech varieties. It is particularly interesting to note that the indexical relationship can involve re-indexing of social meanings, as Johnstone found in Pittsburgh. The current study may throw up interesting new insights into the contemporary social meaning of Newcastle speech amongst young people. With respect to enregisterment, the idea of alignment or footing seems particularly useful to bear in mind, emphasising that routinised responses are not automatically reproduced as listeners position themselves in responses to speakers. Iconisation, like indexicality, links speech practice with societal ideology. Bucholtz and Hall (2004, p380) suggest that they are inverse processes as 'indexicality produces ideology through practice while iconization represents practice through ideology'. The stereotypes of speakers that are retrieved from the cultural belief system in step 3 of Preston's language regard model can be seen as iconised. Overall, this section has given some information to explain how evaluative judgements can not only become routinised for individuals but can be shared as group norms and as stereotypes, which nevertheless are subject to change.

2.5. **Ideological schema: the standard language myth**

Research into language attitudes, as noted in section 2.1.1, can pay attention not only to the favour and disfavour towards the foci of attitude research, but also to the wider societal ideologies influencing responses to linguistic variation. In particular, as

illustrated in Chapter 1, there exists in England a pervasive ideology that holds locally accented speech and speakers to be inherently inferior to a putative 'standard' (Milroy 2001). This section discusses the concept.

2.5.1. Standard language in England.

2.5.1.1. *The language of elite speakers*

In England, the standardisation process has occurred over time to privilege one variety over others, establishing one usage as an accepted 'standard' of grammar, spelling and pronunciation, which have subsequently been maintained through codification in dictionaries and through schooling. Milroy (2006) points out that such rules are not inherent in the language itself, but happen to be features of the selected variety, and are arbitrary, since, if a different variety had become standardised, different forms would be deemed grammatically 'correct'. Trudgill (2000 p5-6) defines 'standard English' in terms of its domains of use and also of a characteristic of its users thus:

> '[It] is that variety of English which is usually used in print, and which is normally taught in schools and to non-native speakers learning the language. It is also the variety normally spoken by educated people and used in news broadcasts and other similar situations.'

The idea that specific users, 'educated people', characterise standard speech, highlights elitism as the basis for the 'standard' English concept rather than a requirement for mutual intelligibility. However, as higher education has become more accessible, with over half of the population now gaining university places, as opposed to a relatively stable proportion of 15% from the early 1970s until the late 1980s (Walker and Zu (2008), it might be expected that 'the variety normally spoken by educated people' might include a broader spectrum of voices, which may in turn result in' broadening notions of talking proper' (Mugglestone, 2003 .p292). It has been suggested that for northern speakers, General Northern English may represent an alternative 'standard', exemplified by the language use of educated speakers in the north of England (Strycharczuk, 2020), but as yet, little is known about evaluations of more educated northern speakers.

2.5.1.2. *Non-regionality*

Another important feature of standard language is its supposed lack of regional markers. However, Crowley (2003) outlines how regional markedness developed an association with class difference through the 18th and 19th centuries. For grammarians of the time 'the

"standard dialect" is that which conceals the birthplace and habitation of the speaker, but the social significance ascribed to it is not limited to geography. This form bears within it a mark of a specific social class since it is the language of the "well-bred" and "well informed" (Crowley (2003 p 112).

2.5.1.3. ***Accent neutrality***

One of the chief regional markers in a variety is accent, so it is therefore difficult to separate the idea of a standard English from pronunciation. However, it has been asserted that there is no such thing as a standardised accent or way to pronounce English. Trudgill stresses that 'There is no universally acknowledged standard accent for English, and it is, at least in theory, possible to speak Standard English with any regional or social accent' (Trudgill 2000 p 7). Nevertheless, one accent exists in Britain that is supposedly non-regional and therefore linked closely with the idea of Standard English, known as Received Pronunciation, or RP. This voice has been associated with notions of correctness, and has sometimes been labelled 'the Queen's English' or BBC English'. Such 'standard' accents are often considered to be 'accent-free' as opposed to vernacular speakers who 'have an accent' (Lippi-Green 1997). Like any variety, RP itself is subject to language change, despite the fact that its community are not necessarily geographically bounded (e.g. Fabricus, 2002; Bjelaković, 2017. Hence, outdated voices from the BBC archive no longer sound 'accent-neutral' to modern ears, and perhaps RP is no longer the appropriate label to describe the prestige variety in England (Muggestone, 2003). Moreover, regional varieties of speech have been more frequently heard in broadcasting in recent years, so the idea of an 'accent-neutral' 'BBC English' may be outdated.

2.5.2. Inherent value hypothesis

Research into language attitudes has found that people readily evaluate some varieties as being more or less pleasant than others. It is generally assumed by researchers that these evaluations are socially determined and that there is no intrinsic superiority in any language or variety. The inherent value hypothesis, which suggests that there is some intrinsic superiority in certain varieties of speech which has resulted in their higher regard in a community, was tested by Giles, Bourhis et al (1974). The Welsh respondents in the experiment were unable to distinguish between higher status Athenian accented speech, taken to be a standard Greek variety, in contrast with lower status less favoured Cretan speech. This was taken as evidence that where varieties of Greek speech were not culturally familiar, no intrinsic quality of the standard variety would cause it to be

preferred, giving evidence for the imposed norm hypothesis, which supposes that the standard variety is considered more pleasing because of cultural norms. The social connotation hypothesis (Trudgill and Giles 1978) suggests that ugliness or beauty in language varieties are due to associations with other features, such as the perceived ugliness of urban landscapes. This hypothesis accounts for the prejudice that urban northern speech is ugly, or rough. This association also extends to speakers of the language variety, to whom social characteristics are ascribed in accordance with social stereotypes activated by their speech. Section 1.2.3.2 suggested that not only is the north of England identified in opposition to the more affluent south, but within the north, the north-east region is perceived as being further disadvantaged. The social connotation hypothesis accounts for negative assessments of regional speech varieties that may result in linguistic insecurity in Newcastle.

2.5.3. Linguistic insecurity

The 'cultural cringe', a term used by Phillips (1958 p89-95) to describe inferiority felt by a minority culture when faced with a dominant culture, has been termed 'linguistic cringe' when applied specifically to language attitudes (Clyne 1995 p24). The idea of the cultural cringe depends upon comparison. Use of the term originated in Australia to describe the prevalent perception of deficiency in the work of post-colonial intellectuals compared with British or European counterparts. In a linguistic context, the perception of deficiency in a person's speech variety is in comparison with a standard form of the language which is deemed to be prestigious. Labov used the term 'linguistic insecurity' to describe the perception of inferiority of their own speech among New York speakers, in contrast with 'an exterior standard of correctness' (Labov, 2001, p. 277; Labov, 2006, p. 318).

Meyerhoff (2006 p292) identifies linguistic insecurity as 'speakers' feeling that the variety they use is somehow inferior, ugly or bad', a definition that emphasises the perceived aesthetic quality of speech varieties. As pointed out in section 2.5.2, the inherent value hypothesis is almost universally refuted by linguists, yet folklinguistic study, examining the perceptions of non-linguists, frequently finds such beliefs to exist. According to Labov, it is an inevitable consequence of the hierarchical social meanings associated with variation. He places 'standards of correctness imposed from without' in opposition to 'the group which helped form their native speech pattern' (Labov 2006 p318), emphasising a power imbalance in the distinction between 'us' and 'other' which is also echoed by Wolfram & Schilling-Estes (2006 p398) 'It stems from the belief that

"the language of a socially subordinate group is linguistically deficient". This deficiency has, as its corollary, a bias towards the types of 'standard' language described in 2.5.1.

2.5.4. Destandardisation

The dichotomy between a relatively uniform 'best' language and regional variation in 'inferior' vernacular language, although a simplistic model, seemingly underlies the attitudes discussed above and in chapter 3. However, two processes, demotisation and destandardisation, have been identified which can weaken the status of the traditional supposed 'best language' variety (Coupland & Kristiansen 2011).

'Demotisation is [the] revalorisation, ideological upgrading, of [a] 'low-status' language to 'best language' status.' For instance, in Denmark, attitude studies have revealed increasing valorisation of the previously stigmatised 'low Copenhagen' speech variety (e.g., Kristiansen 2009). Similarly, in England it has been suggested that 'Estuary English' may be replacing RP as a norm (Mugglestone 2003).

'Destandardisation is a possible development whereby the established standard language loses its position as the one and only 'best language'' As mentioned in section 2.5.1, the proliferation of regional voices in broadcasting may indicate this process in England.

Overall, this section shows that language attitudes are shaped by ideological schemas, often supported by and perpetuating power imbalance, but which nevertheless are also subject to change. By collecting up-to-date attitudinal information in Newcastle, evidence may reveal the extent to which a standard language ideology persists in judgements of accented speech. However, measurement of such attitudes presents complications, which have been a topic of considerable debate in the field of language attitudes research.

2.6. **Measurement of language attitudes**

Since Allport's early definition of an attitude emphasised the cognitive nature of attitudes as, 'a mental and neural state of readiness, organised through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related' (Allport 1935 p 810), an attitude has been recognised to be 'a hypothetical construct' (Hogg and Vaughan, 2014 p151) and as such cannot be measured directly. Therefore, assessment of the evaluation of an attitude object depends upon elicitation of some observable response. Researchers use various techniques to elicit responses, the most prevalent of which has been the indirect 'matched guise technique'.

Language attitude study, with a basis in social psychology, emerged as a distinct field in the 1960's, when Lambert et al (1960) set out to ascertain how language attitudes differed towards two languages, English and French, in the bi-lingual setting of Montreal. A matched-guise speech stimulus instrument was used, where one reader, who was competently bi-lingual, produced a recorded speech performance in both languages (known as guises). The respondents were either French speaking or English speaking, with varying degrees of proficiency in the other language. The varieties were a standard variety of English and a status variety of French i.e., European French. In addition, two more local varieties of Quebec French and broad Quebec French were presented. Participants were asked to rate speakers according to a series of trait descriptors. The traits used in the evaluations were selected to include 'several of those commonly considered necessary for social and economic success (e.g., looks, leadership, confidence, ambition)', and also what have since been grouped as social-attractiveness traits, i.e., 'personality characteristics generally considered of greater value, such as likeability and kindness' (Lambert *et al*. 1960: 48). The pioneering work of Lambert et al (1960) proved to be highly influential, to the extent that the matched guise technique became almost synonymous with language attitudes study and has subsequently been used in contexts worldwide (see Garrett, 2010 for a comprehensive overview) to measure comparative evaluations of different varieties of speech.

2.6.1. Benefits and limitations of the traditional matched guise method of attitude elicitation

2.6.1.1. ***Attitude object***

Matched guise and verbal guise studies have been developed to overcome the problem that simply asking people about their attitudes to social, geographical or ethnic language varieties may not produce answers which reflect their real attitudes. The matched guise does not ask respondents what they think of varieties or languages, but presents the languages or varieties in the form of recorded text passages, read by a bilingual speaker adopting the authentic guise of the languages or varieties in question. The subjects are then asked to evaluate the speakers they have heard in terms of attributes. Although ostensibly asking for value judgements about individual speakers, the technique indirectly elicits attitudes towards the language variety, as this is the only variable on which the texts differ. In terms of validity, the attitude expressed is not a hypothetical response. The attitudinal object is present, in that actual language varieties are being experienced.

2.6.1.2. ***Measurement of responses***

Judgements of each speaker, according to the selected personality traits, are usually measured using scales. However, interpretation of the values on numerical scales is also a tricky matter. A simple agree/ disagree response to a statement does not allow for strength of attitude to be measured. This is important, because strongly held attitudes are considered to be more persistent over time (Krosnick & Petty, 1995). A Likert scale has the advantage of showing the extent to which a view is held, by asking for a graded response to each statement. However, a consideration that applies to most scales is that the gradations between intervals on the scale may not have the same meaning for all participants. The bipolar semantic differential scale is widely used, where pairs of opposite trait descriptions are evaluated on a scale of numbered intervals, so that a neutral position between two opposites would be positioned in the middle of the scale. However, this neutrality may reflect relevance rather than moderation. For instance, participants could be asked to evaluate a speaker using a 7-point scale labelled with the opposite adjectives intelligent/unintelligent. Mid-point scores of 4 could be interpreted as meaning moderately intelligent. On the other hand, participants could choose the neutral position to indicate that they do not have any opinion about the intelligence of the speaker. A further issue to consider is that selection of suitable antonyms may have an effect on the responses. Nevertheless, studies using the matched guise technique have resulted in comparable findings which have established the main dimensions of language evaluation. Zahn and Hopper (1985) identified the three over-arching categories as superiority, (e.g., educated) attractiveness (e.g., friendly) and dynamism (e.g., enthusiastic). These have been condensed by other researchers into two categories of competence (or status) and social attractiveness (or solidarity). Giles and Billing (2004 p 190) describe matched guise as a "rigorous and elegant method for eliciting apparently private attitudes". However other limitations remain.

These are identified by Garrett (2010) as: i) the salience question, ii) the perception question, iii) the accent-authenticity question, iv) the mimicking authenticity question, v) the community authenticity question, vi) the style authenticity question and vii) the neutrality question. These give rise to some problems, which I will evaluate briefly.

<u>i) The salience question</u> concerns the possibility that in the test conditions, language differences may be more salient than they otherwise would be. Lee (1971) has suggested that repeated listening to the same text may make listeners focus more on differences in

the speech than they would do in normal conditions. This problem is exacerbated by the attempt in many guise studies to control for confounding variables by having speakers read aloud the same passage. One possible remedy for this issue is to design a speech stimulus that includes more natural speech, although this option brings with it a requirement to consider the extent to which the content of the speech may influence responses. For instance, McKenzie (2008a, b, 2010) used a speech stimulus comprising the relatively neutral content of directions on a fictitious map.

ii) The perception question arises when respondents and researchers may not share a perception of which variety a voice represents. For instance, Thorne (2005) found that attitudes to Birmingham speech were sometimes due to misattribution of specific variables of Black Country speech. To counter the perception question Preston (1999) has suggested that respondents should also be asked to identify where each speaker originates as there is a possibility that the respondents will misidentify the voice, although it has been suggested that attitudes to language can operate below the level of awareness necessary to complete such a task.

iii) The accent-authenticity question. The matched-guise technique attempts to isolate accented speech as the attitude object, keeping other variables constant. However, Garrett (2010) points out that voice features such as intonation and speech rate vary along with accent varieties. Consequently, where phoneme differences are the only features of accent permitted in the voice recordings, there is a danger that the speaker no longer sounds typical of the area.

iv) The mimicking authenticity question Clopper and Pisoni (2002 p 273) point out a limitation of the matched guise test that the speaker may not replicate authentic speech in each guise, and therefore the listeners' responses may be to stereotyped productions of speech. It is therefore difficult to be certain that the results in fact show how listeners would respond to a real speaker. For this reason, many researchers have adopted the verbal guise variation of the matched guise technique, where different speakers produce 'real' voice samples for each guise. However, this technique runs the risk of introducing extraneous variables into the experimental conditions, as voice differences between different individuals are unlikely to be limited to accent alone.

v) The community authenticity question. Community authenticity is of significance to any study which assumes a speaker is prototypical of a particular speech community.

Within the variety "Welsh English", it has been found that perceptions of particular regions vary (Garrett, et al. 2003). Similarly, within any variety there will be sub-varieties and the extent to which these differences are important will depend upon the scope and purposes of the study in question.

vi) The style authenticity question. Style authenticity directly interferes with the validity of the data. If the speech stimulus is a reading passage, this differs from natural speech, and can be expected to influence the attitudes elicited. This problem highlights the need to take into account the situated context in devising tasks in guise exercises, and in interpretation of the responses.

vii) The neutrality question. The question of factual neutrality is problematic, in that all language use represents identity and culture, and so any text will carry with it the potential to have unintended significance for the hearer.

2.6.2. Benefits and limitations of methodological alternatives to the matched guise technique

2.6.2.1. *Verbal guise*

The verbal guise technique is a modification which addresses some limitations of the matched guise technique. The single speaker restriction is relaxed for the sake of producing more authentic speech, accurately representing each variety. For instance, McKenzie (2008 a, b) used the verbal guise to study the responses of Japanese students to six varieties of English speech. The instrument that McKenzie developed for this study used spontaneous speech instead of a reading passage and employed different speakers for each guise. In this way, a more natural sample of speech could be offered as the attitude object. Differences in content were controlled by asking each of the speakers to give directions using a map. The same fictitious map was used for each speaker.

This technique itself is not without limitations. Care must be taken to eliminate other speaker variables as far as possible, as the subjects may respond to voice qualities rather than to the variety in question, a major advantage of the matched guise research. Whilst replication of studies using the same semantic-differentiated scales may aid linguists in comparing findings and drawing broader conclusions, nevertheless there are drawbacks to using a common set of trait descriptors. As the same terms may not be interpreted identically by all respondent groups, there is an argument for designing specific scales which have salience culturally for the participants (e.g., McKenzie 2008 a, b.).

Additionally, some respondents may be encouraged by trait descriptors to exhibit stereotyping behaviour. One possible solution to this problem is to elicit free-chosen responses (e.g., Garrett et al 2003). Another potential problem with the speaker assessment method is that listeners may be unwilling to make judgements based on a person's voice (Bucholtz et al (2008).

2.6.2.2. ***Implicit measures***

Although indirect, in that the participant believes they are making a judgement of a speaker rather than of the speech variety, the matched guise is not an implicit test, as the participant is aware that they are making an evaluative judgement. The Implicit Association Test (IAT) offers a solution to this problem, by using processing times as a measure of favour or disfavour, using the principle that congruent ideas are more readily processed than incongruent ideas.

The IAT uses a sorting task to measure reaction times. The participants categorise two sets of cues which are presented concurrently on a computer screen. Participants perform a non-evaluative categorisation task on the first set of cues, which present the language varieties targeted by the experiment. At the same time, participants sort an unrelated stimulus, presented in the second set of cues, into categories of 'good' or 'bad'. A favourable response to a specific language variety is indicated by measurably faster processing times in response to combinations that present the language variety with 'good'.

Implicit attitudes and explicit attitudes are distinguished as being immediate reactions and thoughtful reactions respectively. Pantos and Perkins (2013) found that self- reported explicit attitudes were incongruous with the IAT findings. However, it was not suggested that either of the attitudes is more authentic than the other. Rather, the cognitive processes involved in the formation of implicit and explicit attitudes are distinct and can therefore produce contradictory results.

One of the chief advantages of the IAT is that it bypasses some of the social sensitivity issues which may influence participants' more considered responses and can therefore be revealing of stereotypes operating below the level of awareness. However, a problem with using a voice clip for this type of test is that the duration of listening time may interfere with the immediacy needed to measure differences in response times. One drawback, that the approach shares with the matched guise, is that the categories selected for the

programme may not reflect the concepts that are most important to listeners in attributing social meaning to speakers. By accessing automatic responses to speakers generally in laboratory conditions, contextually situated sense-making processes are unavailable for analysis.

2.6.2.3. ***Direct measures and perceptual dialectology***

Direct measures, such as questionnaires are still widely used, generally consisting of statements with which participants record degrees of agreement or disagreement using a scale measure. However, it is difficult to design questions without bias. Moreover, participants may provide socially acceptable answers (*social desirability bias*) or simply express agreement in order to gain approval (*acquiescence bias*). Participants may also interpret the meaning of questions differently than the researcher intended.

Ratings scales can also measure favour and disfavour directly. For instance, Preston presented informants from Michigan with maps of the US, asking them to rate each of the states for the correctness of English spoken there. Respondents rated their own area very highly, demonstrating a degree of linguistic security, while downgrading southern and New York speech. Another task within the perceptual dialectology method, asks respondents to draw on a map where they believed different dialects to be spoken. Preston found that in the USA, the majority of respondents believed a boundary to exist demarcating southern speech. This boundary was more salient even than their own home regional area. Labelling of the areas suggested that the evaluation of correctness formed the basis of these regions.

One of the drawbacks with map-labelling tasks is that participants may have limited geographical knowledge. Another factor is that labels given to the areas may not be the same as the attitudes evoked by actual speech. Researchers often take a mixed methods approach combining direct and indirect methods in order to mitigate some of the limitations of each.

2.6.2.4. ***Language in interaction***

All of the above methods attempt to measure attitudes as somewhat decontextualised extant mental states. Constructivist scholars have advocated discourse analysis methods to interpret attitudinal data in situated contexts. Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain (2009) used interactional analysis of discourse to uncover implied attitudes to the Saxon variety of German. The researchers describe their data elicitation as conversations rather than

interviews, where attitudes towards German dialects were 'discursively constructed by speakers'. This description of how the attitude is expressed highlights the idea that an attitude is not a static thing, waiting to be uncovered, but is constructed in interaction, and a person's attitude towards a dialect can change within the group in which they are speaking. The authors use the term 'positioning' to describe the nature of the language attitudes expressed. However, a problem with this approach is that individual expressions of attitudes may not provide information about broader societal consensus.

2.6.2.5. ***The 'modern' matched guise***

Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain (2009) argued that the cultural ideologies and immediate context which shape attitudes in discourse are also relevant in quantitative approaches such as matched guise research. It is suggested that such research should simulate specific contexts, allowing results to be interpreted with respect to that situation. Soukup (2013) also argues that by careful framing of the task, a matched guise 'experiment' can be designed to access meaning-making in a particular social situation. According to Soukup, an experimental design can be considered to be a discursive event.

Joseph (2016 p 22). explains how the links between language and identity are '*constructed intersubjectively* and *context-contingently*.' In this view, identity is a dynamic process, which is 'constructed' rather than being a static unchanging category. This process is always an interaction. Joseph points out that interaction does not only occur in face-to-face speech. Each reader is a subject who constructs the meaning of a text, and an identity of the writer. I take the view in the present study that the same kind of interaction occurs when a listener hears a recorded performance of speech. The speaker constructs an identity in the performance, which includes the meaning they give to their variety of speech. The listener constructs an identity for the speaker in response to the recorded speech, which includes the social meanings signalled by the speech variety.

2.6.2.6. ***Keywords***

Garrett et al (2004) developed the keywords attitude elicitation technique as an alternative to scale responses. Keywords are free response word associations provided in response to the attitude object, frequently used in order to select meaningful adjectives for use in bi-polar semantic scales. Keywords can be used as main data, as they 'offer a shorthand for evaluative discourses' (Garrett et al 2004 p 216). Thus, concepts that are important to listeners can be revealed. Further, especially interesting in the light of the constructivist

framing of the matched guise suggested above, keywords can be interpreted as positioning interactions, as they ‘’ can actively 'promote' or 'relegate' individuals to membership of ingroups and…outgroups’ (Garrett et al 2004 p 216). The semantic richness in data offered by the keyword technique in comparison with semantic differential scales, comes at the cost of limited statistical analysis. Also, reduced context may make interpretation difficult. However, free-chosen labelling responses have been fruitfully used in perceptual dialectology studies to elicit concepts that participants associate with speech areas drawn on maps (e.g., Evans 2011; Cukor-Avila, 2018) and in response to conceptual labels of varieties (e.g., Evans & Imai, 2011; Snodin & Young, 2015). Given the ‘vividness’ (Garrett et al 2005) of keyword free-response items, it is therefore surprising that they have rarely been used in response to speech stimuli.

2.7. **Summary**

Preston’s model of language regard (Preston, 2011), accounting for how variation in speech is imbued with social meaning, provided a starting point to approach my research, which takes a language-ideological perspective towards speaker evaluation.

(Tajfel & Turner 1979) and self-categorisation theory (Turner and Reynolds, 2011) provide a basis for understanding the balance between individual and group identities, involved in perceptions of speech community membership. The stereotype content model was proposed as a framework for interpreting ingroup and outgroup profiles of speakers. The concepts of *salience* and *pertinence* adopted from the REACT framework (Purschke, 2015), offer insight into how speaker evaluations might be viewed as contextually dependent actions.

The chapter attempted to reconcile seemingly oppositional understandings of group identities both as embedded stereotypes and as constructed positions in interaction. The current investigation, of perceptions of their own speech community by young people from Newcastle, depends on a synthesis of these aspects. The diagram presented in Figure 2-11 models an attempt to integrate these somewhat disparate elements.

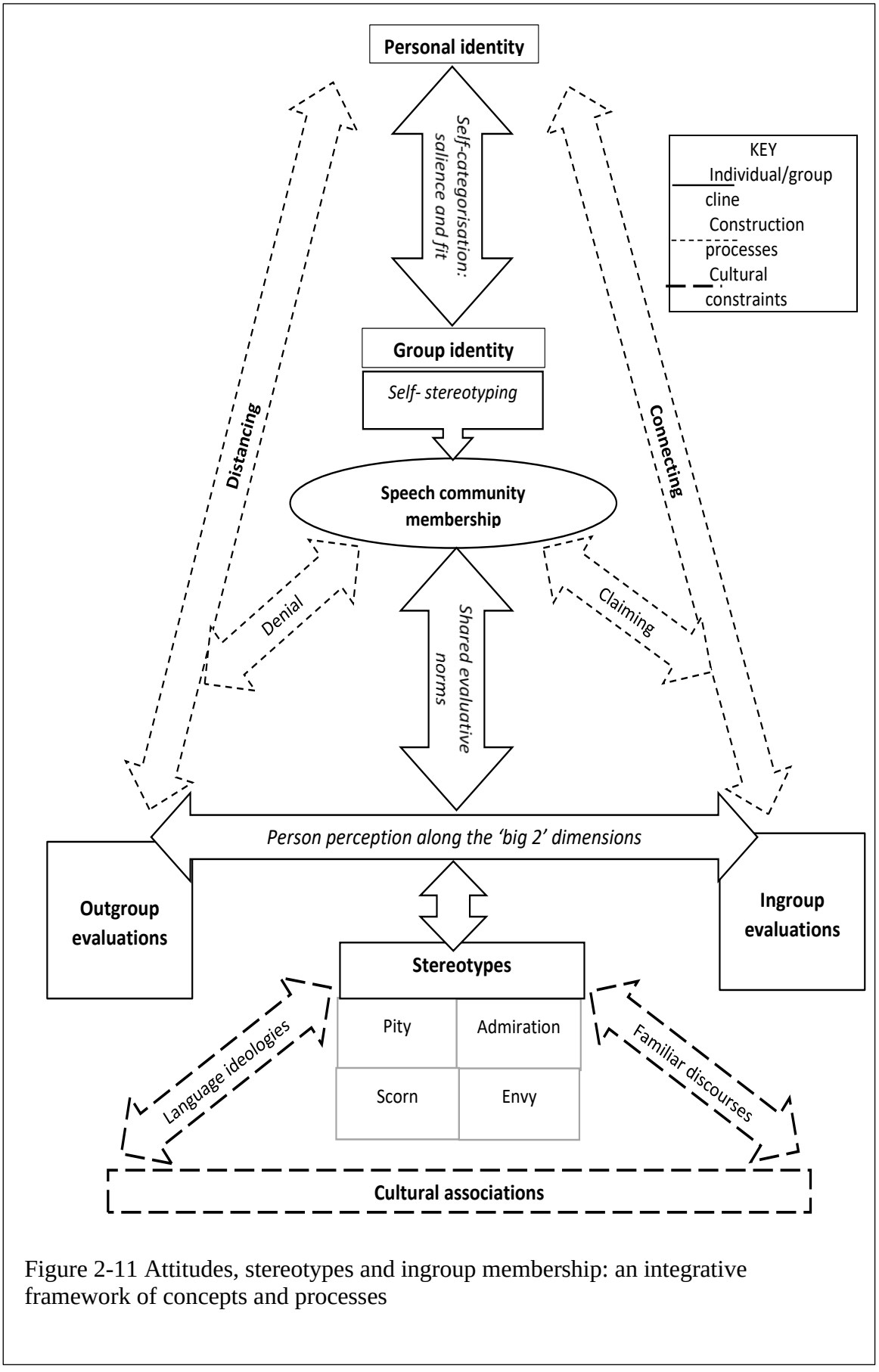

Figure 2-11 Attitudes, stereotypes and ingroup membership: an integrative framework of concepts and processes

In this research, I adopt Soukup's position, which asserts that speaker evaluations can be interpreted as a contextual interaction of meaning making (Soukup 2013), and thus 'speaker assessment research' is not antithetical to a constructivist paradigm.

Overall, the chapter established the following key principles to inform the study:

- Language attitudes are evaluative social practices that attribute social meaning to the speech of others.
- Language attitudes serve identity functions for people and can signal group membership.
- Judgements along two distinct evaluative dimensions give rise to ingroup and outgroup stereotypes in which perceived lack of prestige can be compensated by perceived warmth.
- Evaluative judgements can become routinised for individuals and can be shared as group norms and as stereotypes, which nevertheless are subject to change.
- Language attitudes point to ideological schemas, which are also subject to change.
- Language attitudes are indirectly observed, and to some extent measurable, but are contextually contingent.

Chapter 3: **Review of relevant previous language regard research**

Overview

People form impressions of others based on the way they speak, and the ways in which speakers are regarded are informed by ideological positions. Chapter 1 gave some background into the cultural context of the present study, sufficient for the reader to appreciate the social issues giving rise to attitudes to language in the north east of England. As Dragojevic, Giles and Watson (2013 p 20) point out, 'attitudes are not only a product of the present times but are also a reflection of complex histories'. Chapter 2 clarified how the present study conceives of language attitudes as *evaluative practices*, central to language regard. Chapter 3 reviews a selection of literature detailing some of the established findings of language attitude study. As this is a vast area of research, the chapter necessarily provides only a brief overview, selecting only some of the important developments in the field where these are applicable to the present study.

Firstly, in section 3.1, the chapter reviews key studies that have established the core knowledge base of language attitudes research, focussing on how people evaluate non-standard varieties of speech. Section 3.2 illustrates what those evaluations look like in Britain, outlining comparative studies that identify prestige preferences, with a focus on accents. The next two sections consider why this matters to young people. Section 3.3 will consider the social consequences of language attitudes, particularly in employment contexts, an area where accent bias impacts on the social mobility opportunities for young people. Section 3.4 will focus on evidence that local language has important identity functions.

3.1. **Early work employing the matched guise method to identify prestige preferences**

This section will give details of some of the early previous research that established that difference from 'standard' language is commonly an important factor in evaluations of varieties of speech. The opening chapter argued that there exists widespread opinion that speakers in the north of England share ways of speaking that are not only recognisably geographically regional, but are also non-standard, and further to this are considered

inferior. As this thesis investigates perception of their speech community membership amongst young people in Newcastle in the north of England, the concept of standard language is deemed to be central to this investigation.

One of the important findings of the earliest work in language attitudes study, with respect to the concerns of the present study, is that where social stigma is associated with a variety of speech, it can be shared by the speakers themselves. Lambert et al (1960) found that in Montreal, French speaking participants not only had evaluated their own speech more negatively than English speech, but the views of the majority group, i.e. favour for the majority language, were amplified in the responses of the French speaking participants. The English speaker was given higher ratings by the French speaking participants than by the English-speaking participants. This was interpreted as a reflection of community-wide stereotypes of English and French- speaking Canadians, revealing that social evaluation of inferiority had been internalised by the French speakers.

The influence of this study has been vast. Much of the early research that laid the groundwork for our understanding of attitudes made use of the matched guise technique, and it continues to be used to the present day, although often with modification. The matched guise technique has been adopted to investigate stereotypes of speakers in countless contexts since those early days. Despite the criticisms of the technique outlined in section 2.6, it remains useful for this purpose

The tradition of matched guise investigations into language attitudes has revealed general patterns of evaluation. The next section illustrates the contribution of some early studies to this body of understanding. Although in the Montreal study, the matched guise technique was devised in the bi-lingual context to uncover stereotypes of speakers of two different languages, findings were also applicable to regional speaker-assessment studies. At a sub-national level, the matched guise technique has also been used within Britain in order to find out how speakers of different varieties of British English are evaluated.

3.1.1. Prestige preferences attributed to standard and non-standard English speech

In one of the earliest investigations using the matched guise method to investigate attitudes to language varieties in England, Strongman and Woolsey (1967) used a matched guise instrument to assess reactions to London and Yorkshire accents. A group

of thirty-two student informants were subdivided into northern and southern subgroups. The northern region was identified as the counties north of Staffordshire, while the southern region was defined as London and its surrounding counties known as 'the home counties'. Sixteen students who had spent most of their lives in the northern region were matched in terms of gender, age and course of study with sixteen students who had lived in the southern region. The informants listened to four guises, which were tape recorded voices of two speakers each reading the same passage, once with a Yorkshire voice and once with a London voice. Yorkshire was perceived as more honest and reliable whereas London was evaluated as more confident, but otherwise little difference was found between responses to the guises.

The investigation assumed that differences in responses to the London guise and the Yorkshire guise would indicate differences in stereotypes attributed to each variety, or 'attitudes towards the particular group as identified by its accent' (Strongman & Woolsey, 1967, p. 164) The findings suggested that participants in both groups shared the same stereotypes of speakers, and that these stereotypes differed between the northern and the southern guise. The researchers commented that one of the guises did not appear to be favoured over the other. Nonetheless, where different stereotypes existed, they appear to be in line with the status and social attractiveness dimensions uncovered in much subsequent work. 'Confidence' was attributed to the London guise, which would seem to belong in the status dimension, whereas honesty and reliability that were attributed to the Yorkshire guise relate to the social attractiveness dimension. Interestingly, the researchers themselves made no suggestion of any difference in prestige between northern and southern guises.

The matched guise technique was again used by Cheyne (1970) in an investigation comparing evaluations of varieties from Scotland and London, using participants from the same two areas as the speakers. In this research, using the same scales as Lambert's original study, the Scottish participants evaluated their own variety more negatively in terms of status traits. Different stereotypes were associated with both of the guises. English guises were generally regarded more favourably for the status traits of leadership, intelligence, ambition and self-confidence, whereas the Scottish guises were found to be ranked highly for friendliness. Scottish participants regarded their own voice as more generous, good-hearted, friendly, humorous and likeable. In this case, the guise under

investigation was a national variety. It would seem that the Scottish participants were demonstrating accent loyalty, a feature later identified by Giles (1971).

In 1970 Giles used the matched guise technique to discover how a range of different British and foreign accents were evaluated. Responses were ranked in order of prestige. The same speaker produced recordings of a short reading passage to create thirteen guises. The participants were school pupils drawn from two schools, one in the south west of England and one in south Wales. Seven-point scales were used to record evaluations for different traits. In general, the results favour the RP variety and give the most negative assessments to both the urban and foreign varieties. This study is an early example of the finding that has by now become commonly accepted, that urban varieties of English are stigmatised, and that RP is considered a prestige variety.

Giles went on to conduct several further studies into language attitudes, establishing much of what has come to be accepted knowledge in the field by manipulating different variables. In another matched guise study, Giles (1971) used the term 'accent loyalty' to refer to the preference for one's own variety in terms of social attractiveness traits. He chose three differently accented varieties of speech according to the supposed prestige of their variety. RP (which he also termed Southern Standard English) represented a high-prestige voice, South Welsh was considered medium-prestige and Somerset was considered to be low-prestige. One speaker was considered able to produce all three of the guises. The assumptions of prestige appear to have been shared by the participants, as a distinction was found between traits of competence, which were attributed to the RP speaker, and social attractiveness which was rated higher for the regional speakers. Differences in responses to the regional speakers revealed some accent loyalty in that more favourable responses were given to their own local variety.

Accent loyalty also appears to have been a factor in findings from a study conducted by Bourhis et al at around the same time, in 1973.The participants in this study who were all born in Wales, responded more positively to Welsh-accented speakers, especially for social attractiveness traits, such as friendliness and trustworthiness. RP was only associated most positively with a status trait, that of self-confidence (Bourhis 1973 p 458).

The effect on evaluations of the degree of accentedness was one variable investigated by using a matched guise instrument with 'mild' and 'broad' versions of each of three accents: South Wales, Birmingham and Irish (Giles 1972). Participants were asked to

rate each voice for how pleasant/unpleasant they considered it, how much social prestige they thought the accent possessed and how comfortable they felt listening to it. Older participants, aged 21, were better able to perceive differences in broadness of accents than younger participants aged 12. This is explained by their maturity and probable experience of more variation in voices. As expected, there was less favour for broader voices, except for the case of the Irish speaker. Giles suggests that the degree of accentedness should be controlled in speech stimulus designs as it is a factor influencing evaluations. This is relevant to the methodology design of the present study, which controls for accentedness of the speaker in a speech stimulus which is specifically designed for the research project. One interesting finding is that experience of the regional voice, i.e., having lived in the area for a longer time, resulted in lower perception of broadness in the voice, which Giles suggests may be a desensitising effect. Giles found that most people fail to recognise the broadness of their own accent Giles (1972 p 268) believed that this reluctance to recognise having a strong accent is because of its association with less social prestige.

The effect of accent on the perceived force of an argument was another factor investigated. Giles (1973) investigated the influence of accent on the perceived logic of an argument and on the persuasiveness of the argument. Giles found that an argument was given greater credence when listeners heard a prestige accent than when the same argument was put forward by speakers with regional varieties. A single speaker was used in a matched guise to produce a standard and three different regional voices of lesser prestige. In each guise, an argument about the death penalty was put forward. The quality and logic of arguments were associated positively with prestige varieties, yet persuasion was only influenced by regional voices. This seeming contradiction was interpreted as meaning that persuasion is a result of an affective response to the speaker rather than logic, and that this positive affect is more likely to be triggered by a regional voice than an RP voice. This study is interesting in that it highlights conditions influencing the listener, as well as characteristics of the speaker.

Creber and Giles (1983), found that the situational context of the data collection site could be influential in evaluations of speakers. Although previous research had referred to the importance of context in making judgements, Creber and Giles attempted to manipulate context in an experimental design. Their study used a matched-guise technique to study responses of English schoolchildren from Buckinghamshire to Welsh-accented English speech and to standard RP English. Ratings were collected for eight status traits and seven

solidarity traits. It was expected that the RP speaker would be upgraded on status traits and the Welsh speaker would be upgraded on solidarity traits (in the present study the term social attractiveness is used to describe the solidarity dimension). Of interest here were two differing contexts, a formal school setting and an informal youth club setting. It was further predicted that the preferences would by accentuated by the context, that is that the status preference for RP would be greater in the formal setting and the solidarity preference for Welsh would be greater in the informal setting. Informants evaluated the RP guise more favourably, and as predicted, their perceptions of the same guise became even more positive in the formal setting. Creber and Giles conclude from this that 'we have at last an empirical demonstration that the social setting of evaluation can affect language attitudes… children have different evaluative sets in formal versus informal situations' (Creber and Giles 1983 p159). This is interesting with respect to the present study, which accepts the view that the situational context should be taken into consideration in interpretation of responses to speakers. With respect to social attractiveness of regional voices, however, Creber and Giles (1983 p 158-9) found that 'solidarity traits were not highlighted in the informal context and nor were they particularly associated with the Welsh speaker'. The researchers pointed out that ‘it is important to note (Giles 1971) that 'accent loyalty' leads to an upgrading of non-standard speakers on solidarity traits, if the particular non-standard accent being evaluated is spoken by the judges themselves’ (Creber and Giles 1983 p 159).

The prestige associated with RP speech in a British context was found to extend to America in a study by Stewart et al (1985). As well as investigating whether RP would be regarded as higher in status than American speech, the study aimed to investigate the influence of social class information on attitudes to speech. The study used speech samples from highly educated men speaking in a standard accent, either RP or standard American. Participants also were given typed sheets included confirming and disconfirming social class information. After listening to the voices and reading the social class description, speakers were rated on Likert scales including traits designed to reflect the status dimension (intelligent, confident, unsuccessful, unambitious) and the solidarity dimension (trustworthy, sincere, unkind, unfriendly). British accent and higher class were favoured in the status dimension, but there was a ‘striking reversal in solidarity preferences, i.e., for American and for lower class speakers’ (Stewart et al 1985 p103). Although American in context, this study is relevant to the present research as the

distinctiveness of the big two dimensions was emphasised, 'highlighting the critical importance of examining evaluative reactions along separate dimensions'.

Ingrouping was shown to be a relative categorisation in a study by Abrams and Hogg (1987) in Scotland. Abrams and Hogg conducted a matched guise experiment amongst school children in Dundee to establish whether ingroup favour was demonstrated, as predicted by social identity and self-categorisation theories, which suggest that people tend to evaluate ingroups more positively than outgroups. The participants listened to voices from Dundee, Glasgow and an RP speaker. As predicted, when Dundee and Glasgow speakers were paired, participants evaluated the local Dundee speaker more favourably. However, in a speaker pairing contrasting with Glasgow with RP, Glasgow accents were evaluated positively.

This finding demonstrated that the definitions of which groups are ingroups and outgroups are not fixed, but are relative judgements. Groups are categorised as ingroup or outgroup depending on contrasts within the 'frame of reference', i.e. the self-categorisation salient to the perceiver in the context. Hence, when both speakers were Scottish, a local frame of reference was salient, but when one of the speakers was English, a national Scottish identity became the frame of reference for ingroup favour.

Overall, early studies using the matched guise provided a basis of knowledge establishing that people willingly make judgements about others based on the way that they speak, and that these judgements vary, depending on whether the voice is believed to be a standard variety or vernacular speech. Non-standard speakers will generally be rated less favourably for traits associated with competence or status. However, ingroup favouritism can be demonstrated towards non-standard speakers along social attractiveness or solidarity dimensions, particularly where the variety is shared by the listener. This basis of knowledge about language attitudes forms the foundation of the present study, and for this reason, it seems appropriate to adopt traditional methodology to identify whether similar results are found among young people in contemporary Newcastle. Having detailed the sorts of information that language attitudes studies can uncover; the next section looks at the nature of attitudinal profiles of regional voices revealed by previous studies in England.

3.2. Attitudinal profiles of regional voices in England: prestige preferences and stereotypes

This section will give details of how perceptions of prestige and preferences for specific language varieties are mapped across England. The section investigates evidence that attitudinal profiles point to pervasive stereotypes of speakers.

3.2.1. Perception of non-regionality in standard speech in England

Empirical evidence suggests that far from being non-regional, standard English is associated with London and the south-east of England. Inoue (1996) investigated the image of standardness or non-standardness in accents across Britain, by asking students at universities all over Britain to evaluate their own accent. Evaluations of standardness or non-standardness were then grouped according to accent areas labelled on a map (see Figure 3-1. Inoue interpreted that from north to south, scores for each accent area produced a clear pattern within England, where perception of non-standardness increased in correlation with distance from London, although Scotland did not fit this rule. However, not all accents of the south-east of England were considered to be standard, as London was differentiated from neighbouring Essex to the east.

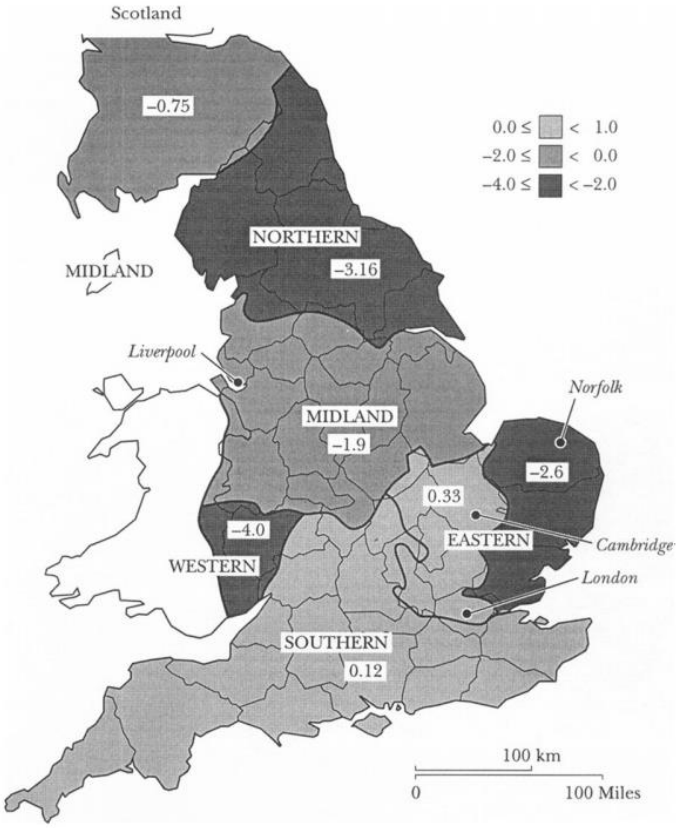

Figure 3-1 Geographical distribution of students' dialect images

(adapted from Inoue (1996 p 145)

More recently, Smakman (2012) conducted an international survey of 1014 respondents, mainly university students, to find agreement on the lay-person's definition of the term 'standard'. The survey was conducted in 7 countries, with respondents from Newcastle University representing England. Direct methodology was used in the form of a questionnaire which firstly asked for a general description of the standard language in their country, and then offered multiple choice questions on who might be considered a typical speaker of the standard language. The results from the general descriptions were categorised. The categories most frequently suggested by English respondents were 'non-regional,' 'social class' and 'correct'. 'Non-regional in these responses clearly did not mean that the standard is universally spoken, as in answer to the question 'Where is the standard language spoken in particular?' the English group mentioned the South region (40%) and London specifically (22%). In contrast, a possible alternative of 'everywhere the same' was chosen by almost half of New Zealand respondents From this survey, two views of standardness were found to co-exist; one which could be categorised as

‘exclusive’ and an alternative ‘inclusive’ view. The English respondents predominantly viewed the standard language as being ‘exclusive.’

However, there is evidence that as a result of dialect levelling (Kerswill, 2003) involving convergence towards a pan-regional northern variety, a new northern standard may be emerging, known as General Northern English, which is associated with middle class speakers (Strycharczuk et al, 2020). Nevertheless, little is known about perceptions of educated speech in the north of England, and as Strycharczuk et al point out, ‘Ultimately, standard speech is defined by what listeners perceive as standard’ (Strycharczuk et al, 2020, p. 16). In order to identify ‘what listeners perceive’ a speech stimulus of young, educated speakers would seem to be the ideal tool for this study. The empirical linguistic evidence seems to support the cultural stereotype outlined in Chapter 1, of the south of England as home to a norm-enforcing ‘standard’ variety of speech, but this study may give a clearer indication of whether young people, responding to actual examples of speech, perceive local voices of other young people, as an emerging standard.

3.2.2. Stereotypes associated with regional voices in Britain

In England, studies have consistently shown negative attitudes towards urban non-standard speech, confirming the findings of Giles (1970), in which RP was afforded the highest status and Birmingham accent the lowest. The results are confirmed by the BBC Voices web-based survey (Bishop et al 2005, Coupland and Bishop 2007), showing that even after years of increasing globalisation, these attitudes still persist.

Coupland and Bishop (2007) carried out the large scale ’Voices’ survey to find out how social meanings attributed to speech varieties are socially structured, with a focus on perceived prestige and pleasantness of the varieties. In their survey, 34 labelled varieties of English were rated on a 7-point scale for prestige and social attractiveness by 5010 UK informants. This was to some extent a replication and extension of Giles’s 1970 study which had included matched guise speech samples but also labels for each variety. Although the researchers point out the limitations of responses to labelled varieties in a decontextualised setting, nevertheless they find that the results still give an insight into ‘broad language-ideological structures that are the backdrop to accent encounters in contemporary Britain’ (Coupland and Bishop 2007 p 85).

Responses to two direct questions, ‘How much prestige do you think is associated with this accent?’, and ‘How pleasant do you think this accent sounds?’ showed that some of

the labelled accents were given high evaluations across both of the dimensions. RP (labelled as ‘a standard accent of English’) was favoured in both status and social attractiveness ratings, as was ‘an accent identical to my own’. Additionally, 'Celtic' varieties from Scotland and the Republic of Ireland were popular. This suggests that the national language varieties may have been seen as alternative standards. On the whole ratings are lower for status than for social attractiveness. It is suggested that conservative and prescriptive views of languages are still prevalent, as all age groups agree that it is important to ‘speak properly’. However, people did not all agree what constitutes ‘proper’ speech, as there was a broader range of scores for status than social attractiveness.

Some more stigmatised varieties were downgraded in both dimensions, particularly Birmingham, Liverpool and Glasgow, but other varieties showed the compensatory pattern of relatively high social attractiveness and low prestige rating in keeping with the majority of previous attitude study in response to regional or non-standard voices. Newcastle, for instance, appeared in 10th place for social attractiveness and 23rd place for prestige in rankings according to mean values of scores.

Regional differences in responses showed some patterning of in-group preference. This loyalty was particularly evident amongst Scottish respondents, who rated the Scottish Edinburgh and Glasgow accents more positively than other groups, and the Welsh respondents who evaluated Welsh English and Swansea accent more favourably. Perhaps further demonstrating accent loyalty, the accent labelled an 'accent identical to own' was highly regarded (Coupland and Bishop 2007:79). Listeners’ own background, then, was seen to have an effect on evaluation.

All regional varieties of UK English were evaluated negatively, below the mid-point on the scale, with urban varieties being particularly disfavoured. Younger respondents were less negative about these ‘stigmatised’ varieties, giving some indication that greater acceptance of language variation may be an attitude change in progress. If, as the researchers suggested in 2007 ‘there may be an indication of ideological value-shift over time here' (Coupland and Bishop (2007 p 85), then it might be expected that young people a decade later should show more positive attitudes towards language variation.

The ‘Accent bias in Britain’ project (Levon et al 2020) recently reproduced the Giles 1970 study again, among 827 members of the general public across Britain, using a list of 38 accent labels. Participants rated each one on a scale of 1-7 along two dimensions- prestige

and pleasantness. It was found that attitudes towards British accents remain largely unchanged from 50 years ago (Figure 3-2). Standard accents were rated highly for prestige, in contrast to urban working-class and ethnic minority accents.

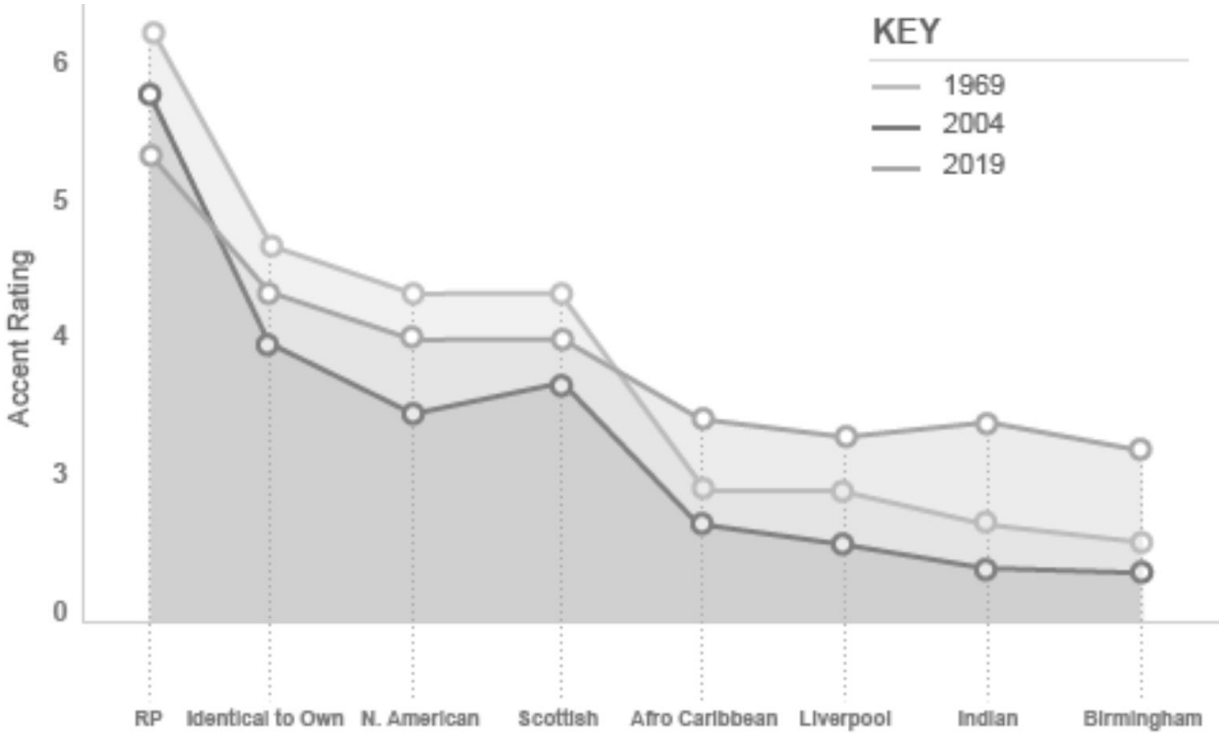

Figure 3-2 Accent label evaluations over time (from Accent Bias in Britain, 2020)

In a second study, using recorded voice samples, 1062 listeners listened to 10 mock interview questions answered by 5 speakers. Candidates' performance, suitability for the job and hireability were rated on a 10-point Likert scale. Younger people (aged 25) responded favourably to all of the voices, with no significant difference in mean ratings between speakers. The lowest-rated speaker was still awarded a score of 6.88, well above the median on the 10-point rating scale. Notably, as in the results from the Voices survey, younger people responded far more favourably than older people (aged 40+) to all of the voices. In particular, older listeners downgraded southern vernacular voices. As the same pattern was found in previous studies, the researchers interpret the difference as age grading rather than change over time, suggesting that distinguishing between these varieties may be learned behaviour later in life.

Watson and Clark (2015) employed an innovative technique to measure attitudes towards accents in real time. Speakers from Cambridge, Cardiff, Dublin, Liverpool and Newcastle, who were controlled for age and gender, all being males of about 16 years of

age speech, recorded retellings of the Cinderella story. They were evaluated by 19 respondents of various ages. Respondents offered answers to the questions 'Does this speaker sound friendly?' and 'Does this speaker sound posh?' The scale used was a magnitude continuum, which is a horizontal line with opposing sentiments positioned at either end, in this case *definitely no/ definitely yes*, which was presented on a computer screen. Respondents used an on-screen slider controlled by the mouse to place their reaction on the scale. As the speech progressed, the listeners could continuously record their reactions to the voice in real time. Watson and Clark were particularly interested in measuring whether specific variants might coincide with fluctuations in measurements.

The labels 'friendly' and 'posh' were considered to be suitable evaluative adjectives to capture the status and solidarity dimensions found to be important in previous language attitude studies. Findings from mean scores were in line with those of Coupland and Bishop (2007). All four of the non-standard guises were evaluated positively for the friendly dimension and negatively for the posh dimension. However, responses to the Cambridge voice, which is here taken to be standard, contrast with previous findings. Although he is the only one to be evaluated positively for 'posh', he is additionally evaluated positively for 'friendly'. One problem arises from choosing the word 'posh' for the rating scale, as it may be a pejorative term, in which case lower evaluations on this dimension my not mean that the speakers are perceived as low in status. Appropriate verbal descriptors for the end-points of agreement scales are an important methodological choice. In my study, I have adopted the term 'friendly' to encompass all of the traits of social attractiveness, but sought an alternative to 'posh' as a holistic status term. Also of interest is the level of inter-rater disagreement between listeners, which is obscured by mean scores. There was agreement between listeners on the friendly rating for the Cambridge speaker, but considerable divergence on other scales.

According to Milroy (2001 p 58), whilst in the American context lexical and grammatical features are more important, on the other hand in Great Britain, accent seems to play a central role in the definition of what standard language means. In a British context, moreover, the concept of 'standardness' in varieties of speech is particularly associated with notions of social class.

Giles and Sassoon (1983) used a Cockney non-standard guise and RP for the standard guise in a matched-guise study investigating the relationship of accent and social class. Informants evaluated the speaker in the Cockney guise as being lower class, even when

presented with information that informed them that the speaker had a middle-class background. Giles and Sassoon (1983 p 311) concluded that in a British context, 'the effect of accent is exceedingly robust on listener's ratings.'

Rampton (2006) researched the significance of social class for a group of teenagers aged 13 and 14 in a 1990s multi-ethnic comprehensive school in inner London. The research focussed on stylisation of 'posh' and 'cockney' ways of speaking used by 2 male and 2 female speakers in a class of 30 pupils. Close analysis of multiple interactions where these stylisations occurred, suggested that overall, 'Cockney seemed to be associated with vigour, passion and bodily laxity, while posh got linked to physical weakness, social distance, constraint and sexual inhibition' (Rampton 2006 Ch 9). Interpreting the interactions in relation to wider societal discourses of identity, Rampton concluded that traditional ideas of class were still important among these multiracial pupils. Rampton argues that

> 'these kids' insistent reproduction of a very traditional class imagery contradicts the view that class is losing its salience particularly among contemporary urban youth… these kids' everyday practical consciousness was deeply impregnated with the sensibilities that we traditionally associate with social class in Britain' (Rampton 2006 p 9).

This conclusion challenged the view that Britain was becoming a country less concerned with social class discrimination.

Also in London, in a more recent study, Kircher and Fox (2019) examined attitudes towards the urban contact variety, Multicultural London English (MLE). Online questionnaires were completed by 800 participants from different areas of London, who varied in age, gender ethnicity and educational background. Attitudes towards the conceptual label 'MLE' were elicited through agreement and disagreement with a set of questions, measured using 5-point interval Likert scales. Five items, intended to measure the status dimension, related to intelligence, education, ambition, employment opportunity and possibility for social advancement. Of the five items intended to measure solidarity, three described perceived speaker characteristics: friendliness, sociability and likeability. Participants also rated the importance of MLE to its speakers using two measures: its importance as part of being a young Londoner and whether it gives the speaker a sense of belonging to their peer group. Results showed negative attitudes.

However, the two-dimensional patterns traditionally associated with non-standard varieties were not found in responses. Factor analysis showed that five status traits and three attractiveness speaker characteristics loaded onto one 'overall attitudes factor'. Of particular interest is the researchers' suggestion that this uni-dimensional evaluative profile may differ from evaluations of traditional varieties, because consensual social stereotypes regarding the new contact variety are not yet established.

McKenzie (2015a) investigated recognition of L1 and L2 varieties of English, including a Tyneside example, amongst a respondent group of 194 students in Newcastle in the north east of England, many of whom were born in the region. The overwhelming majority of respondents correctly identified the origin of the local Tyneside and Glasgow Scottish speaker in a free classification task which also elicited positive comments about the local variety. Correctness is also seen to be important to this group of respondents, with the varieties of native speakers of English, far from being stigmatised as examples of urban regional varieties, evaluated as being the most correct. This is interesting because it appears to show that when 'nativeness' is the frame of reference, the Newcastle voice can be highly regarded.

In a further study, McKenzie (2015b) investigated implicit attitudes of the same students to varieties of L1 and L2 speech using a verbal guise instrument comprising 6 speech samples, in addition to explicit attitudes towards diversity in the English language. Of the two L1 varieties presented, Tyneside was evaluated more positively in terms of status, whereas Scottish Standard English was considered more favourably in terms of attractiveness. In comparison with L2 (in this case Asian) varieties of speech, Tyneside speech was placed in the place usually occupied by 'standard' speech in the hierarchy of responses. This contrasts with previous research in Denmark, where Kristiansen (1999) has found that even a trace of the local accent was sufficient for social identification purposes, and local speakers were downgraded on all evaluative traits. Whilst the non-native speaker frame of reference may account for the relative preference of Tyneside speech, the interesting possibility arises that in the north of England, a less heavily accented variety of local speech perhaps references an alternative standard.

McKenzie and Carrie (2018) carried out a recent study into attitudes towards northern and southern varieties of English speech among participants in Newcastle, using the IAT and self-report to identify differences between implicit and explicit attitudes. The researchers selected appropriate area labels by using a pilot study of a comparable group

of participants, choosing their most frequently named areas where northern and southern English is spoken. Newcastle, Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, and Sheffield represented areas where northern English is used. Cambridge, Oxford, London, Southampton, and Brighton represented the areas where southern English is used. Trait labels were the most frequently provided descriptions of the language spoken in northern and southern England. Five positive traits were labelled correct, good, educated, clear, and high status. Their opposites, used as negative trait labels, were not correct, bad, not educated, not clear, and low status. Participants provided an explicit measure of attitudes to northern and to southern speech by responding to two statements, 'I like to hear varieties of English spoken in the north of England' and 'I like to hear varieties of English spoken in the south of England'.

Results of the IAT test revealed an implicit bias in favour of southern English speech, whereas results from the explicit self-report measure showed positive responses to both attitude objects, but preference for varieties of English spoken in the north of England. Though not significantly different, younger participants showed greater favour for northern speech in both implicit and explicit tests.

McKenzie and Carrie note that that the traits provided in the pilot study, with the exception of good–bad, seem to relate to the status/competence dimension utilised in MGT/VGT studies. This is interesting, as, rather than using traits from previous studies, McKenzie and Carrie have identified traits which are most important to the participants in question. The selected traits possibly suggest that status is more important to participants in Newcastle when characterising varieties of speech. However, it also means that the implicit preferences for northern or southern speech can only be measured on one dimension, whereas the explicit measure 'I like to hear' perhaps includes a social attractiveness aspect. Although the explicit measure 'like to hear' does not give an explicit evaluation on the same dimension as the implicit trait descriptors used in the IAT, nevertheless the positive responses to the explicit measure would seem to indicate tolerance of accents. This seems to support Coupland and Bishop's suggestion that younger people's higher levels of tolerance of accented speech may be a positive sign for the future (Coupland and Bishop 2007).

McKenzie and Carrie make the interesting suggestion that the discrepancy between implicit and explicit evaluations could perhaps be explained in terms of differences in recall from memory between longer established attitudes or stereotypes, which are

accessed implicitly, and more recently formed ideas about language, which are more likely to be available for conscious processing.

This section has detailed some of the evidence that perceptions of differential prestige between supposedly 'standard' speech and vernacular regional varieties are widely shared across Britain. It has also been demonstrated that such perceptions have been relatively stable for 50 years. Nevertheless, there are some indications that greater tolerance of accented speech may signal a destandardising trend. Up-to-date information from Newcastle will help to clarify whether there is greater tolerance of hitherto stigmatised, locally accented, speech among young people. The next section will look at why such perception matters, in terms of the impact on people's lives of being perceived to 'have an accent' (Lippi-Green 1997). The section will detail some of the studies providing evidence that such commonplace attitudes have real-world consequences for speakers of supposedly non-standard varieties.

3.3. Real world social consequences of language attitudes

Studies have been undertaken in various specific contexts, demonstrating that language attitudes can have very real consequences in such situations as law, education, health and employment (see for details of studies in various domains Giles and Billings 2004; Garrett 2010). This section focuses on some examples of previous research documenting such prejudicial bias in employment contexts, which are particularly relevant, as access to employment represents the opportunity for social mobility for the young people in my study, as they are on the point of entering the work force.

3.3.1. Accentism and employment suitability

Soukup (2001) investigated language attitudes in the United States towards Southern American English using a simulation of a job interview. Respondents were told that they would be acting as personnel managers hiring sales staff for a national company. Soukup chose a verbal guise instrument, which presented recordings of all speakers reading the same text. Respondents listened to a male and female speaker in each guise i.e., a Southern Tennessee accent and a 'neutral' accent, which could not be regionally placed. Voices were matched for pitch and quality to avoid variables other than accent. Respondents marked their evaluation on a 5-point scale bi-polar scale for each of twenty-

one attribute items. These were selected to include qualities suitable in a salesperson and southern stereotypes.

Soukup concludes that language attitudes towards Southern American speakers are negative compared to a neutral accent, especially for males. Generally, a Southern accent is considered low-status and non-standard. Southerners themselves subscribe to this stigma, displaying no linguistic solidarity. Soukup suggests her study supports Preston's idea that for Americans there is a default definition of standard American English, i.e., not Southern. The standard is not a specific variety so much as an absence of regionally marked speech. Soukup concludes that the 'institutionalised character of southern stereotypes …and attitudes based on these are strong and durable' (Soukup 2001 p 67). Soukup points to the necessity of defining a specific situational setting in the study, to avoid drawing conclusions which may not apply universally in other settings, as language attitudes are context-dependent.

In another job-interview context, this time in Germany, Rakic, Steffens and Mummendey (2011) found that regional German accents, Saxon, Bavarian and Berlin, resulted in lower perceived competence and hireability than standard German, independently of their qualifications. The respondents were 98 students, whose ages ranged from 18-30 years old. The respondents were from different places, Thuringia, Saxony and Western Germany, but these different origins were not found to have an effect on the evaluations. Neither did the respondents' reported use of their own dialect.

The respondents heard 6 different speakers giving responses to job interview questions which had been designed to demonstrate high social skills and competency. Competency and social skills were each assessed with nine items, plus an additional question asking for a general response on the competency and social skills of the candidate. Hireability was assessed by a five-point rating, on a bi-polar scale from very probable to very improbable, in response to a single question- 'How probable do you think it is that this speaker would get the job?'

It was concluded that the data show that in the context of a job interview, regional accent presence alone was enough to trigger negative impressions of those speakers. The authors suggest that a lack of effort may be inferred from the use of a non-standard accent. The assumption here would be that a standard accent is available to all, is appropriate for the situation and ought to have been adopted by the speaker. The authors conclude that 'our

experiments show that the mere presence of a regional accent influences stereotype activation and possible discrimination against the speakers' (Rakic et al p 879).

A shortcoming of the experiments, noted by the researchers, is that the results may have differed if the participants had been professional recruiters. The participants were not asked if they would hire the candidate, but whether they think the candidate would be hired. The responses may then reflect a misinformed estimation of recruiters' probable evaluation. Nevertheless, these beliefs are revealing about young people's taken-for-granted assumptions concerning the unsuitability of specific language behaviour (in this case, non-standard accented speech) in employability contexts.

In a similar context in Britain, Giles et al (1981) used a matched guise technique to investigate 'whether individuals' speech styles would affect their perceived suitability for various jobs'. A single speaker was used to produce two guises, South Welsh accent and RP in recordings of the same passage. In the role of employers, a group of students were given the task of assessing the speakers for four different jobs of varying degrees of status. The results of this study were in keeping with previously mentioned general findings that link attitudes to language with the perceived status of the speaker. On the basis of their recorded speech, the informants judged the speaker in the RP guise to be most suitable for the higher status professional job, whereas the speaker in the Welsh guise was considered to be more suited to lower status jobs. This stereotyping was not understood to be a straightforward matter of competence and lack of competence, as suitability for the lower status job was presumed to require a different set of competencies. They were considered 'more competent in terms of low status jobs, in the sense that they should perform 'menial' tasks more ably and willingly than persons who are 'overly competent' (Giles et al. 1981 p 97). The nonstandard guise was also more positively rated for social attractiveness traits such as being likeable and good-natured. Giles et al (1981 p 97) point out that their own findings are in keeping with the results of similar studies in North America (such as Shuy 1973 and Kalin and Rayko 1978), which also find that standard or nonstandard accents can influence perceptions of job status.

The studies in this section indicate that young people perceive their employment prospects to be negatively impacted by linguistic variation. As employment contexts are particularly important to school leavers, the context selected for the present study also uses a job role context. However, hypothetical employment suitability questions may be

unsuitable for participants with limited experience of job markets. Hence an appropriate context was considered to be important in the research design.

3.3.2. More recent investigation of accentism in Britain

Using genuine professional recruiters, a recent British project, 'Accent Bias in Britain' (Levon et al 2020) has found that although stereotypes towards accents do exist in Britain, there were encouraging findings that bias resulting from such stereotypes can be suppressed in an authentic employment recruiting setting. The study investigated recruitment at elite law firms. Two verbal guise studies were conducted, one with 846 respondents from the general public and the other with professional recruiters for elite law firms. The stimulus comprised speakers of 5 English accents; Received Pronunciation (RP), Estuary English (EE) Multicultural London English (MLE) General Northern English (GNE), Urban West Yorkshire English (UWYE). Listeners heard 10 interview questions, testing legal and professional expertise. In this study, professional recruiters were able to judge better quality answers correctly, regardless of accent. Interestingly, in this study, the General Northern English speaker is presented as one of the 'standard' varieties, and appears to have been evaluated as such, in contrast with the findings of Smakman (2012), where standard speech was perceived to have a southern provenance.

Baratta (2016, 2017, 2018), focussed attention on the experience of the accented speakers themselves in a genuine employment context, and found evidence of linguistic prejudice against northern varieties of speech within British teacher training. Not only did perceptions of accented speech impact on supposed suitability in the workplace, but also on the wellbeing of individuals. Baratta (2016) conducted a questionnaire study amongst 92 British participants to find out whether accent modification impacts on identity. Most respondents were unconcerned by the idea of modifying their accent, but over a third of participants regarded accent modification as 'selling out' or feeling like 'frauds'. These findings prompted further investigation into the implications for educationally qualified speakers of stigmatised British accents.

Baratta (2017) identified 'accent liability' in the British workplace in the context of teacher training, among people who were training for roles as teachers in schools. In this study reporting on the experiences of 32 trainee teachers, otherwise qualified individuals reported that their mentors had advised them that their accent was not considered appropriate for the role of teacher, as it was not 'professional'. Accent modification was

suggested to 24 of the 32 teachers, of whom 11 accepted the suggestion without believing it to be an issue, whereas 13 regarded it negatively and in some cases perceived it as prejudicial.

Baratta presents evidence of linguistic prejudice given by three of the trainees, who describe specific instructions to modify pronunciation in order to comply with classroom expectations. Mentors justified their advice on the basis of intelligibility for pupils in the class, and also the expectations of parents. The reasons trainee teachers gave for disagreement with their mentors' advice included the belief that linguistic diversity should be respected. They also felt conflict between their linguistic pride and the forced modification of their voice, that is, modification which they did not agree with. For these respondents, accent was part of how they perceived their identity, and was felt to be essential to their authentic selves.

The Accentism Project (https://accentism.org) is a current initiative run by Dr. Erin Carrie and Dr. Rob Drummond, gathering evidence of instances of discrimination based on accent in Britain. The prejudices identified in Baratta's work do appear to be more widely applicable throughout Britain. This project has the intention of directly impacting on social behaviour. Interestingly, this project also takes into account the two-way nature of prejudice, which can see speakers of stereotypically 'posh' voices ostracised for the way that they speak (Paterson 2019).

Overall, a standard language ideology appears to remain influential in perceptions of speakers of varieties of English speech, resulting in a deficiency view of accented speech, which has often been shared by the speakers themselves. Nevertheless, examples of prejudicial responses to accented speech were resisted by the teachers in Barretta's studies, and it is possible that their beliefs rather than those of their trainers are more representative of modern language attitudes. As local language varieties were also seen to serve important social identity functions for some of the teachers reporting in Barratta's studies, the next section looks at further evidence showing how speakers themselves perceive their linguistic self.

3.4. **Language and community membership**

Attitudes of linguistic groups towards their own way of speaking are important in the context of language maintenance, because if they perceive their linguistic background in a positive way and as key to their self-identity, they are likely to maintain their unique

way of speaking as a way to distinguish themselves from other groups (Giles and Johnson 1987). This section looks at evidence that linguistic identity is important to a speaker's sense of self.

3.4.1. Local identification, perceptions of 'correctness' and linguistic insecurity

In order to measure linguistic insecurity (see 2.5.3 for details of this concept), Labov designed a questionnaire offering a selected set of lexical items, each of which had two alternative pronunciation options. Respondents were asked which of the two variants was correct. Linguistic insecurity was interpreted to be present where respondents identified one of the forms to be correct but claimed that they used the alternative form. Labov identified 'a profound linguistic insecurity' (Labov 2006 p 322) throughout New York.

However, apparent linguistic insecurity can mask *covert prestige*, whereby speakers relate to a different set of values, even though these sometimes may not be overtly expressed (Labov1966 p108, Trudgill 1972). Hence, low ratings for a speech variety according to some specific traits may not mean that the variety is not valued, but that the traits themselves are not considered important by that particular group.

Labov used the term covert prestige when trying to account for persistence of nonstandard speech forms among the working-class speakers in his New York study. Labov's work suggested that all New York speakers shared a set of linguistic norms which favour certain variants as prestige forms. Whether or not the respondents did in fact generally use the more standard or prestige variant, the majority of respondents reported that they used it. This overt reporting suggested they would prefer to use standard speech. Nevertheless, Labov suggested that despite their overt preference for standard forms, they must at some level want to speak the way they do.

Preston (2013) looked again at Labov's concept of linguistic insecurity, this time with a focus on Michigan, the supposed home to 'standard' American speech. Preston used a similar method as in Labov's study, offering two pronunciations of a lexical item, with oppositions selected for their relevance to Michigan production. Respondents identified which one they used themselves, and which one they believed to be 'correct'. Previous evidence suggested that Michigan speech is popularly regarded as correct, sometimes deemed to be free of regional variants, and could be regarded as standard. However, surprisingly, greater insecurity was found amongst these Michigan respondents than had previously been found by Labov in New York. Preston suggests there are differences

between the types of insecurity expressed in the two places: group and individual insecurity. Regional speech may be considered incorrect, and by extension the individuals consider themselves to share this deficiency with the group, as in the NYC study. Where a variety is highly regarded, individual speakers of the variety may nevertheless consider their own speech to be deficient, as found in Michigan.

Preston cautions against interpreting the results as insecurity. He suggests that there is a preferred way of speaking that is 'correct but not too correct' (Preston 2013 p 323) which differs from the 'superstandard' a variety which is considered correct but is not a target for speakers. This preferred way of speaking may be described as 'normal' or even as 'boring'. Preston considers that where individuals have identified a variant to be correct, yet different from their own pronunciation, they may not wish to stray from average speech, as 'pronunciations are correct only in the superstandard sense, and their alternatives are normal, hardly a source of insecurity (Preston 2013 p 324).

In Britain, Trudgill (1972 p 184), also found that stigma was associated with local non-standard speech in Norwich, in overt comments such as 'I talk horrible' but assumed there also might be 'hidden values associated with non-standard speech' (Trudgill 1972 p 183). Some evidence was uncovered through further questioning of respondents. People who had stated they did not speak properly and would like to do so, admitted that if they adopted these forms of speech their friends and families would consider them to be 'foolish arrogant and disloyal' (Trudgill 1972 p 184).

Trudgill found further evidence of covert prestige by following Labov's method of using a self-evaluation test. Two alternate productions of a variant were read aloud, and participants selected which one they would use. In contrast with Labov's findings, Trudgill's results from Norwich showed much less over-reporting of standard speech forms (only 16% as opposed to the 62% in Labov's New York study), and even some over-reporting of non-standard variants.

Trudgill based his analysis on the idea that people 'perceive their own speech in terms of the norms at which they are aiming rather than the sound actually produced'. Those who over-reported their use of non-standard variants in Norwich appeared therefore to be *aiming* for a set of non-standard variants, demonstrating a favourable attitude. The covert prestige of non-standard forms was seen by Trudgill to be an indication of in-group membership. It was suggested that those who over-report non-standard usages were 'more

concerned with acquiring prestige of the covert sort and signalling group solidarity than with attaining social status' (Trudgill 1972 p 188).

Birmingham, the 'bête noire' of British urban varieties' (Coupland and Bishop 2007 p 84) is the focus of a study by Thorne (2005) investigating whether people in Birmingham have internalised the stigma associated with their local variety of speech. An 18-item Likert scale of opinions about accents was designed, and responses to this were elicited from 154 subjects, who were considered to be likely to represent a cross-section of the Birmingham population as well as people from other cities or areas, who formed the control group. The results suggested no difference in the accent loyalty of Birmingham speakers when compared with non-Birmingham speakers. Many respondents expressed pride in their city and in the way that they speak. Interestingly, it is suggested that where negative responses are elicited, these could be attributed to the recognition of negative perception of others rather than representing the respondent's own attitude.

These studies are of interest because they focus specifically on participants' judgements of their own speech varieties. One important issue raised by both Trudgill and Preston is to challenge the assumption that participants aspire to use conventionally 'correct' forms. This uncertainty highlights the importance of finding out what concepts are important to the study participants in forming judgements of varieties of speech. From these broad concerns, the next section narrows its focus to evidence relating to local allegiances closer to the geographical context of the present study.

3.4.2. Speech community membership in northern England

A rich tradition of language study in the north of England has described local variation and change. 'Northern English has been the object of much attention linguistically over the last thirty years, but scholars have had a tendency to focus on the phonology of the dialects and varieties encountered' (Hancil & Beal 2017 p 1). Those studies with an interest in perceptions of community belonging in the north of England have largely been concerned with where people believe distinctive ways of speaking to exist. There have however been some studies including an attitudinal focus which give useful insights into the construal of speakers as 'other' to perceived community ingroups.

In a study of speech in Sunderland, Burbano-Elizondo (2006, 2015) found evidence of a clear divide both in identity and linguistically, between Sunderland and its more perceptually prominent neighbour, Newcastle. The study researched perception and

production among thirty respondents in Sunderland, investigating where Sunderland respondents believed differences to exist between Tyneside and Sunderland speech, and collecting tokens of usage of these variants. The SURE methodology was adopted, a data collection method devised by Llamas for the Survey of Regional English. A questionnaire was used as the basis for interviews. Phonetic data was recorded during informal speech discussing the responses.

The speakers showed awareness of difference between Sunderland and Tyneside speech. For some features, such as h-dropping, this awareness was explicit and available for comment. Other variants, such as glottalisation associated with Tyneside speech, were expressed in accent imitations. Awareness differed between participants, some participants having more detailed knowledge of specific features, but all were able to comment on the variety at some level. 'The Sunderland dialect therefore is a reality for them, and by discussing specific features of their variety, or providing global descriptions, they are not only defining their community, but 'othering' neighbouring ones' Burbano-Elizondo 2015 p201).

Llamas (2007) used attitudinal data elicited through interviews to interpret a generational shift in usage in Middlesbrough. The study found that a series of local government boundary changes reflected a generational shift in *orientation* away from a 'Yorkshire' place identity towards 'Teesside' or an emerging 'Middlesbrough' place identity. 'This suggests that speakers react to changing political boundaries of the area in which they live, and if such boundaries change, so may the way inhabitants perceive themselves' (Llamas 2007 p596). Identification with place also extended to perception of their own accent. Older participants perceived themselves to be from Yorkshire and to have a Yorkshire accent, whereas for younger respondents, Yorkshire was seen as irrelevant, and they could not imagine their voice being mistaken for a Yorkshire accent. Linguistic trends appeared to show convergence with north east usage and divergence from Yorkshire usage. However, Llamas suggests that researchers must be cautious when interpreting language use as an indicator of community identification, as participants expressed hostility towards the Newcastle voice despite converging usage. Her findings were interpreted as evidencing local rather than regional affiliation.; 'A strategy of localism appears to be being utilized by the young speakers of the study to construct their place identity' (Llamas 2007 p602). Younger people adopted forms with a wider north-

east currency, but perceived use of these forms as indexing a distinctive Middleborough identity rather than signalling identification with Newcastle and the north-east.

Pearce (2009) has used methods from perceptual dialectology to uncover perceptions of dialect areas in the region, held by 1600 people from across the north east of England. He investigated locally held beliefs about dialect areas using a questionnaire, collecting responses from multiple participants, of both genders, and of a diverse range of ages and social backgrounds. The respondents were given a list of locations and asked whether the speech of people in the locations was similar or different to that of people in their home town. No actual speech samples were used. The responses were scored, then converted to little arrows, using a technique derived from an earlier Dutch study. Once these were mapped, the results showed three broad perceptual areas, distinguishing between the three city-areas of Newcastle Sunderland and Middlesbrough. One of the interesting findings here is the distinction people within the region make between different speech groups in the area, and the rejection of the wholesale use of the term Geordie to represent the North east as a whole. 'Geordie' speech community identity was perceived as 'other' to more localised ingroup identity labels, supporting the findings of Burbano-Elizondo and Llamas.

One very unusual circumstance highlighting the link between ways of speaking and perception of community membership is reported by Miller et al (2011) in a study of Foreign Accent Syndrome. Foreign Accent Syndrome is a speech disorder that can occur after a stroke or head injury, where a speaker appears to be involuntarily using a different accent than they have used before. The 'foreign' accent may be perceived as a generic accent, a specific national language or a different regional variety. The voice is appreciably different from 'real' examples of the accent in question but has an impact on identity. Miller et al conducted interviews with 14 individuals with foreign accent syndrome, to discover how the condition has been found to impact on identity, both in terms of sense of self and in perceptions of the speaker by others.

Thematic analysis of interview transcripts revealed that altered accent had a serious impact on the sense of self and well-being of speakers with foreign-accent syndrome. There was a feeling of no longer belonging in their own community because of their altered speech and 'a sense that their fundamental being had been altered' (Miller et al 2011, p 1058), as can be seen in the following examples:

'I thought I've lost my self, I was lost, I wasn't me anymore, I was just a lost person' (P1).

'my old self died the day I lost the speech '(P5).

"I just want my old voice back, this is not me" (P3)

Not only did the individuals feel they had lost something of themselves, but others perceived them differently, putting relationships under strain "*I was not the woman he married. I was literally a foreigner"*.

In the case of an individual from Newcastle upon Tyne, the alteration from a strong regional accent resulted in estrangement from her friends, who made fun of her voice:

> '*when I was in [hospital] they used to call me Miss Poshy, you see they didn't realise that I had had . . . with the stroke that this had happened . . . Yes, and they just thought I was very posh . . .Well I hated it at first . . . my friends [who thought she had become "posh"], they used to come at the hospital and say things like that but I hardly see them now. (P4).*' (Miller at al 2011 p 1061)

The evidence given in the study clearly demonstrates that accent is powerfully associated with a sense of self. In the case of the individual from Newcastle, southern identity is clearly construed as 'other'.

Montgomery (2011) used measurements of geographical distance to interpret ingroup preferences from a speaker recognition task. Participants were asked to listen to a speaker and place on a map where that speaker was from. Star-burst maps were produced to show distances between the actual location where the voice originated and their positioning on a map by participants. Maps were interpreted as being indicative of ingroup preferences, as evaluative judgements of speakers were found to be explanatory of misplacements of voices. Popular varieties can be 'claimed' by participants who place the voice closer to their own location. This positioning is interpreted as an attempt to include the voice into their own ingroup by geographically positioning them closer. On the other hand, 'denial' happens when local but unpopular voices are positioned further away on the map. The Geordie voice was accurately placed by Carlisle listeners, who did not attempt to claim the speaker. However, responses to the local Carlisle voice suggested linguistic insecurity, as Carlisle respondents demonstrated denial of the local voice, combining low ratings with inaccurate placement.

Watt and Llamas (2017) conducted a study into language and identity at four locations chosen for their proximity to the border between England and Scotland. Data were collected north and south of the border in locations to the west, at Gretna and Carlisle, and in locations to the east, at Eyemouth and Berwick. Investigating both usage and identification, their study found that affiliation seemed to be a relevant factor involved in differences in usage between younger and older participants. Part of the analysis examined whether the national labels Scottish or English are preferred over the label British. Affiliation was measured using a relational analogue scale to record scores for identification with a series of place labels.

Older and younger speakers identified themselves differently. Even though mean scores mainly indicated a preference for national identities as opposed to 'British' as an identity label, differences between the results showed that the degree of this preference was lesser in the younger participant group than in the older participant group, particularly in Carlisle. This was taken to indicate that 'Young people are more ready to describe themselves as British then older ones' (Watt and Llamas, p 205). This is interpreted as 'suggesting that shifts are occurring in the 'sense of place' assigned to border locations' (Moore & Montgomery, 2017 p 6). However, it is quite possible that generational shifts in identification may also be occurring in other locations and may not solely relate to border identities. If the generational difference found in the results of the border study is more widespread, we may expect to see a similar pattern of affiliation among young people in Newcastle as those found among the younger generation in Carlisle.

Jensen (2017) also considered affiliation in a study of Tyneside participants that measured vernacular awareness, attested language use and social class. Jensen investigated whether local forms were salient to Tynesiders, i.e., whether they were aware of the forms and whether they believed them to be local. Sentences containing spelling variations to suggest variants were included on a questionnaire. Participants were asked how frequently they might hear the usage. They were also asked whether they used this form themselves. Thirdly they were asked whether any parts of the sentence were local to Newcastle. Affiliation with Tyneside was also measured using a 7-part questionnaire. Social class was measured by two measures: their own identification and classification based on education. Jensen found that participants generally were successful in identifying variant forms local to Tyneside, showing awareness of both the form and its indexicality. Jensen suggests that some stigma may still be associated with use of the

variants, as participants were more likely to report that they recognised use of the variant in the speech of others, than in their own speech.

Tyneside forms were most successfully identified by the group who identified themselves as middle class, but were placed in the working class category according to educational attainment. This same group were significantly less likely to claim that they used the variants in their own speech. In terms of affiliation this group showed no difference from other groups. Jensen assumes that in distancing themselves from local forms, this group are not distancing themselves from 'localness' but from some other indexed meaning. Jensen interprets this as a sign of hypercorrection as, for them, Tyneside speech is still highly stigmatised. (Jensen 2017 p 241). This finding is interesting, because it suggests that recognisably local forms indexed a lower class, whereas affiliation with a Tyneside identity did not. However, as the local forms were presented as spellings in writing, participants may have seen these as 'errors' and may not do so in response to voices.

Section 3.4 confirms that linguistic identity is important to the sense of self. However, as local forms can index both class and place, either of these associations may result in rejection of speech characterised by 'Geordie' forms.

3.5. **Summary**

- Language provides cues for social evaluation. Listeners readily form judgements of speakers' characteristics on the basis of their speech, imbuing varieties of speech with social meanings.
- A prevailing language-ideological schema that views language spoken in the north of England to be 'non-standard' and to be inferior underpins attitudes towards varieties of speech and to variation more generally.
- Listeners frequently judge accented speech along two dimensions, ascribing higher status to speakers of 'standard' English. Nonetheless, accent loyalty can result in compensatory favourable evaluations of ingroup speakers in terms of social attractiveness.
- Patterns of preferences have remained relatively stable in Britain for 40 years. However young people may express tolerance of variation.

- Speakers of non-standard language may be socially disadvantaged. Persistent stereotypes can result in prejudicial behaviour towards accented speakers. These stereotypes are sometimes shared by speakers themselves.
- Locally accented speech can be an important aspect of identity for individuals and can shape affective feelings of ingroup identification.

Taken together, the studies presented in chapter 3 demonstrate that the link between language and social identification can be problematic. Listeners' perceptions are shaped by widely held stereotypes of speakers of 'non-standard' varieties, which can result in prejudicial behaviour. However, language may be important to the sense of self. The next section draws on the evidence of the previous three chapters to put forward the view that further research into contemporary language attitudes amongst young people in Newcastle would be of value.

3.6. **Rationale for the present study**

3.6.1. Examining potential change in enduring stereotypes

We know that a deficiency view of English spoken in the north of England can have negative consequences for speakers (e.g., Barratta 2017), and that the stereotypes indexed to varieties of speech in Newcastle upon Tyne are particularly strongly enregistered (Beal 2009) and stigmatised (Watt 2002). Patterns of claiming and denial (Williams et al 1999) have also suggested linguistic insecurity (Labov 2006) persists in at least parts of the north, causing participants to distance themselves from local ways of speaking where these are perceived to be stigmatised (Montgomery 2007, 2012). Some more recent evidence, however, gives some indication that attitudes towards Tyneside speech may be shifting (McKenzie 2015 a, b; McKenzie and Carrie 2018). Therefore, it would seem timely to focus attention on attitudes in the locality in order to establish the extent to which stereotypes still hold, or whether evaluations of prestige are being renegotiated. This constitutes the principal aim of the study: to establish whether linguistic insecurity or language pride is evident in the attitudes held by participants from the Geordie speech community towards local language varieties.

3.6.2. Methodological frameworks

To these ends, this study proposes to combine ratings scales, traditionally used in measurement of attitudes, with analysis of spontaneous free-chosen word association data. This choice rests on two reasons. It seems advisable to elicit attitudes using similar methodologies to previous studies, as original methods could be responsible for any novelty in results. However, research in the language attitude tradition has been criticised because of some limitations of the matched guise technique, which has characterised study in the field for many years (see section 2.6 for more detail about these concerns). To compensate for these possible shortcomings, the suggestion here is to employ additional open-ended data-gathering and analysis methods, specifically the keywords method.

The keyword method identified 'Welshness' as an important dimension of evaluation in the context of Wales (Garret et al 2003; Garrett et al 2004; Garrett 2010), providing evidence that free chosen keyword responses can reveal additional dimensions which may exist alongside the stereotype content model's 'big two' of competence and warmth. Furthermore, the keywords data-set creates a 'reduced form of evaluative discourse' (Garrett et al 2005 p 46) from which social meanings of speech varieties can be interpreted and thus appears to offer a worthwhile approach bridging two positions which have emerged in recent approaches to language attitudes research. Renewed interest in language attitudes has been accompanied by a proliferation of innovation in techniques. These new directions seem somewhat dichotomised between a focus on experimental and conceptual design such as the Implicit Association Test (e.g., Campbell-Kibler, 2012; McKenzie & Carrie, 2018; Pantos & Perkins, 2013) or else on the constructive processes of language in interaction (e.g Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2009; Potter and Wetherell 1987; Rampton 2006). The keywords technique has been surprisingly little explored as a possible option to capture attitudinal information that is both contextually situated and yet measurable.

The stereotype content model offers a useful framework to identify perceived ingroup and outgroup memberships. Using both evaluation scales and the keyword technique, will enable comparison, specifically investigating whether the open-ended 'keyword' responses reproduce the stereotype content model's 'big two' dimensions (e.g., Abele & Wojciszke,2018; Fiske, 2018) in the Newcastle context.

I will also examine how far keyword data can be understood as interactions in which participants connect to or distance themselves from speakers, and whether these can be interpreted thematically and critically with respect to their underpinning ideological assumptions.

3.6.3. Examining regional affiliation at 'nested' levels of locality

As a result of growing interest in the supraregionalisation of local speech, (e.g., Kerswill 2003) there has been a concurrent increasing focus on the maintenance of distinctiveness in language varieties at a more localised level (e.g., Johnstone 2010.) However, surprisingly little consideration has been given to whether attitudes to varieties of English in the Newcastle region indicate more localised or more supraregional orientations. Although some studies in the north-east of England have investigated local identity affiliations as an explanatory variable, where the focus was on language use (e.g., Beal et al 2012, Burbano-Elizondo 2006, Llamas 2007, 2015), it would seem appropriate that attitudinal data should also give consideration to the degree of claimed affiliations. Furthermore, as social identity theory suggests that different available group memberships may be drawn upon when identifying as ingroup members (Tajfel, 1982), according to the frame of reference in play (Abrams and Hogg, 1987), it is surprising that so few studies include consideration of possible diversity in identity preference, such as the relational analogue scale used by Watt & Llamas (2017). The study therefore aims to include information about orientation towards different possible group memberships, considering levels of locality in terms of voice and place.

3.6.4. Examining attitudes within a contextualised situation.

Language attitude studies have faced criticism for their decontextualised data. Focus on the community of practice environment (Eckert, 2006) has largely been restricted to research with a language-in-interaction approach, but consideration of the immediate context and cultural ideologies has also been advocated in quantitative work (Liebscher & Dailey-O'Cain, 2009; Soukup, 2012). By centring the investigation in a single situational context, the study may reveal some of the interplay between macro-level social norms and meso -level organisational structures influencing perceived ingroup memberships.

3.6.5. Examining attitudes of young people as they reach maturity

Attitudes of young people are particularly interesting, as they are at the forefront of both language and attitude change. Aspects of a person's identity are inextricably linked with the social meanings indexically associated with varieties of speech available to them. Consequently, ingroup identification with ways of speaking, (and resulting attitudes towards speakers of varieties), is part of the ongoing development of identity that continues to some extent throughout the lifespan. However, at the end of adolescence, some degree of identity achievement has been attained. Adolescence has been the focus of the majority of studies of identity development, where statuses in identity formation have been found to advance in a progression towards the state of identity achievement (Marcia 1966; Waterman 1982; Meeus 2018). Characteristically, younger adolescents are more likely to be still exploring various alternatives, and have not yet consolidated their identity status. Therefore, as identity is still not confirmed in younger adolescence, investigating social identification amongst older adolescents may be more indicative of current attitudes towards their speech community.

Furthermore, members of the generational cohort reaching adulthood at the present time are considered to have different formative experiences than the millennial cohort who preceded them (Dinnock 2019). The experiential context is likely to be influential in attitude formation in general, including the language attitudes investigated in the present study, as according to Oskamp (1977 p 132), 'the overall cultural context within which we live can provide a set of assumptions and salient 'facts' which determine the attitudes we will develop.' Thus, older adolescents were considered to be the ideal cohort of participants in the present study, as their responses can give an insight into acceptance or rejection of negative stereotypes associated with local ways of speaking in a new generation.

The first three chapters explored the issues which gave rise to the research questions, giving evidence that the indexical meanings associated with northern regional ways of speaking are important to individuals and should not be dismissed as inconsequential. An overview of the cultural background shaping stereotypes of speakers in the north of England generally, and Newcastle in particular, showed that a deficiency view, whereby northern speakers are contrasted with the more prestigious south, was prevalent. Further, within the north, the north-east region was seen to be perceived as disadvantaged economically, with possible consequent influence on the prestige attributed to Newcastle

speakers. Theoretical explanations of language regard as a social and psychological phenomenon were then offered, clarifying how such perceptions become embedded, both for individuals and in wider society. However, as the first two chapters also argued that stereotypes of speakers are socially maintained, it was also proposed that language attitudes should be understood as evaluative *actions* and interpreted as pointers to societal ideological schema. Evidence was then given from previous studies investigating the social meanings attributed to language varieties, including those of the north of England. demonstrating two important aspects of attitudes to language varieties. It was shown that prejudicial responses to speakers are still commonplace, but conversely local ways of speaking can be important to people's sense of belonging. A rationale was then proposed for the further need to study the possibly changing perceptions of the speech community to which they may be supposed to belong, among informants from the north of England, and Newcastle in particular. It was suggested that the attitudes should be sought of a participant group of young people, who are likely to be most influential in, and influenced by, language contact and change. In order to collect data that allows for nuanced, contextualised analysis of perceptions, a focus on one specific location was suggested.

Overall, the first part of the thesis establishes that a detailed examination of existing folklinguistic research demonstrates potential theoretical and methodological value in conducting further in-depth research in Newcastle in the north of England, focused on perceptions of prestige and ingroup membership among young people within the region. Chapter 4 specifies the aims of the project and details the methods selected to undertake this research.

Chapter 4: **Research design**

Overview

Having established that language regard amongst young people in Newcastle is sufficiently interesting to warrant further study, many methodological choices remain, each of which have implications for the potential value of the work. Chapter 4 details the methodology selected to accomplish the aims of the study, including justifications for the decisions involved in arriving at the final research design. After specifying the objectives of the study and the research questions, the chapter gives details of the participants who took part in the study and how they were selected, followed by the tasks they undertook to generate the data required to answer the questions. As this study entailed development from scratch of novel rating-scale and questionnaire instruments, the chapter covers how these tools were devised, piloted, and refined, to arrive at the final version. This includes consideration of the value of the pilot study in informing the methodological decisions made for the main data collection. A data processing and analysis section explains how scores were derived from the instruments used and what analyses were conducted to address the study questions.

4.1. **Aims**

The present study aims to provide insight into the structure and construction of contemporary language attitudes among young people in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in the north-east of England. The thesis firstly aims to investigate how *attitudes,* elicited through *evaluations*, *impressions* and *affiliations*, attribute meaning to local and wider regional varieties of speech. By analysing how listeners position themselves towards speakers, it is hoped not only to reveal perceptions of *ingroup membership* of the local speech community, but also determine whether responses to local ways of speaking accept or challenge prevalent *stereotypes* and their underlying *ideological assumptions*.

Secondly the study aims to use a mixed methodological approach using closed and open data elicitation methods to generate a semantically rich data set, which will allow for a more in-depth discussion of the *stereotypes* operating in perceptions of the linguistic community among the participants in question, and the concepts important in forming impressions of speakers.

In short, the aim of the present study is to provide additional quantitative and qualitative data to build upon existing research into English spoken in the north of England which will add to our knowledge of language and social identification in this speech community. As a reminder, the research questions developed to guide this investigation are as follows:

4.2. **The Research Questions**

RQ1

What do *evaluations* of local, area, regional and national varieties of speech reveal about perceptions of speech community membership amongst young people from Newcastle?

RQ2

i. What concepts are important to young people from Newcastle in forming *impressions* of local and wider regional speakers?
ii. To what extent are keyword associations revealing of *language ideologies?*

and

iii. In what ways do these keyword associations express distance from or connection to speakers?

RQ3

To what extent do claimed *affiliation* with the local voice and with the local place reflect ingrouping in responses to speakers?

4.3. **Participants**

Although the focus of the study was narrowed to young people on the threshold of adulthood from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, selection of participants required further decisions. This section explains the rationale for choices made in selecting participants for this study, discussing factors which were considered in deciding on the eligibility of participants, the selection of a participating institution, and details of the participants involved.

4.3.1. Who qualifies as a Geordie?

As discussed in Chapter 1, definition of the ethnonym 'Geordie' is by no means uncontested (Beal 2009; Pearce 2014). Although previous studies have shown that the geographical area perceived to be linguistically 'Geordie' not only can encompass the whole of the north-east of England but sometimes can extend across to the west coast (Montgomery 2007), nevertheless localised variation has also been demonstrated to be salient (Pearce 2012), and this variation is believed to be areally located. For the purposes of this study, it was decided to limit participation to Newcastle upon Tyne as the city represents the least disputed geographical provenance of Geordie speech.

The study collected data from a group of participants from Newcastle upon Tyne who shared the core experience of having been educated in primary and secondary schools within Newcastle upon Tyne. School environments are community of practice sites where identities are formed as 'the result of positive and negative identity practices rather than as fixed social categories' (Bucholtz 1999). The school environment has also been seen to be important in developments in language use, for instance, Kerswill and Williams's findings in Milton Keynes pointed to the importance of the shared network of the school environment in the development of a new koiné (Kerswill and Williams, 2000). Likewise, if attitudes may be changing from 'handed-down' speech community norms, such interactions could be expected to be formative. Therefore, long-term experience of schooling in Newcastle was considered a useful requisite for participation.

4.3.2. The choice of a school context for participation

A school context was selected in preference to other possible domains for volunteer recruitment, to reach participants who would be a sample of the target population which would be less compromised by sampling bias. The following reasons informed this decision:

Firstly, the school population is exclusively drawn from the locality. As school catchment areas limit enrolment to pupils resident in the vicinity, attendance at a Newcastle school was considered appropriate as a preliminary criterion for selection.

Secondly, school attendees are a broader sample of the population than are likely to be found in more elective domains.

Thirdly, from a practical point of view, a school offers the potential to recruit large numbers of participants required for the quantitative elements of the study design. (See section 4.6 for more detail of the study design.) It was hoped that school consent would be granted for mass participation by an entire year group.

Furthermore, since there is considerable precedent for folklinguistic research among school population samples in different locations (see chapter 3 for details of some of this previous research), the sample selected for this study allows potential for comparison with previous findings.

4.3.3. The selection of a specific participating institution

Schools in Newcastle upon Tyne admit students from catchment areas in the immediate local vicinity at primary school level (age 5-11) but have a wider catchment area at secondary level (age 11-18). Even so, at secondary age, any demographic differences concentrated in locations across the city would be reflected in differences in the populations of local schools. Therefore, the location of the secondary school could have an effect on the sample population. The chosen school was selected because it is an entirely non-selective, co-educational secondary school with a particularly broad catchment area including pupils from the west, east and north of the city. As a result, social differences present in the broader target population would all be reflected in the sample.

Nevertheless, despite having a diverse intake of pupils from around the city, the idea of representativeness is still problematic. The school is considered to be a community of practice (Eckert 2009), which is likely to be influential in the construction of attitudes. Thus, it was decided to recruit participants from within one such community, and to consider the elicited attitudes with reference to this concrete situated context. In order to limit the variables under consideration, the potentially confounding effect of different school locations was removed by the decision to narrow the focus to one specific population of school students.

As the evaluative response is considered to be an interaction with a speaker, albeit at a remove, then the situational context of that interaction is influential in shaping responses. Hancil and Beal (2017) point out how widespread school education since the 1930s has redefined the use of traditional dialect variants. ‘‘School-educated northerners have had to redefine their sociolinguistic defining criteria, along with being confronted with the

requirement to meet with the expected norms of the received pronunciation instilled by dialectologist Ellis (1890) and associated with advancement and mobility' (Hancil &Beal 2017 p3). School situations might be expected in general to be status-stressing environments. Furthermore, the participants' experience of the school environment can be expected to have been influential in shaping expectations of advancement and mobility. Therefore, some information about the school ethos operating at the data collection site may be helpful, and can be found in Appendix E.

4.3.4. The participant group

The target population was one particular age group, i.e., older teenagers (aged 16-18), who are reaching maturity in the generational cohort known as generation Z (Dinnock 2019). It was envisaged that all of the relevant year group, sampled from one school, would be able to take part. The participant group were selected for suitability based on a geographically limited but socially inclusive definition of eligibility. The sample was expected to reflect the mix of gender, ethnic and social background of the wider population of Newcastle. Figure 4-1, which gives a breakdown of the school population compared to national figures, shows how this mix was distributed amongst the group. Due to the high retention rates of post-16 pupils in the school, a similar proportion could be assumed in the study cohort.

	School	**England – mainstream secondary schools**
Total number of pupils on roll (all ages)	1364	3327970
Girls on roll	48.3%	49.8%
Boys on roll	51.7%	50.2%
Pupils with an SEN Education, Health and Care Plan	1.2%	1.7%
Pupils with SEN Support	5.8%	10.8%
Pupils whose first language is not English	21.9%	16.9%
Pupils eligible for free school meals at any time during the past 6 years	23.7%	27.7%

Figure 4-1 How the pupil population at the school compares with the national figures in the 2018/2019 academic year

The above data shows that the intake of the school has a typical distribution compared with the school population in England. The numbers on roll are similarly divided between boys and girls, and there is roughly similar proportion of students with an SEN Education, Health and Care plan. More than a fifth of students have a first language that is not English and almost a quarter of pupils have been eligible for free school meals.

In the questionnaire section of the research instrument, which elicited residence information identifying the areas of Newcastle where participants lived, twenty-seven places were listed, covering all areas of the city. These are detailed in Appendix D.

4.4. **The Research Instrument: outline**

This section outlines which elements were selected for inclusion in the research instrument and the rationale for their selection. Further detailed descriptions of how the tasks were adapted for use in the context of the current research are provided in section 4.6 giving details of choices that were made in the development of the instrument.

The research makes use of a verbal guise speech stimulus instrument comprising nine voices. I designed my research instrument to explore language regard amongst young people in Newcastle, in order to contribute to our knowledge about social identification. My overall interest was in investigating whether 'modern' Geordies consider themselves to belong to a speech community of others who sound like themselves, and if so, what this identification means to them. The methods used draw upon the most established tradition of work in language attitudes, as outlined in chapter 2 and in the review of relevant folklinguistic studies in the north of England in Chapter 3.

The research instrument comprised three elements, including both open and closed response items, each of which aimed to shed light on the meaning of the speech community to the young people in question. In order to address RQ2, the first element is a 'keyword' association task, which prompts free-chosen responses to a speech stimulus, to elicit impressions of speakers, and by extension varieties of speech. This element was conducted first in order to obtain spontaneous associations without prior thinking. In order to address RQ1, the second element is a speaker selection task, where participants rate their responses to speakers in terms of two selection criteria which were designed to reflect the 'big two' dimensions considered to be universal in person perception. The third element addresses RQ3 by using a questionnaire which collects overtly declared self-

reports of the participants' place and linguistic affiliations. These three elements were designed to be presented as paper and pen tasks and accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation which supported the instructions.

4.4.1. The speech stimulus

The objective of the first part of the research instrument is to investigate the responses of informants to the actual attitude object, i.e., examples of speech, rather than a conceptual model of typical speech varieties. As described in chapter 2, verbal guise tasks have previously been used to elicit attitudes towards speech indirectly, by asking listener-judges to rate a series of speakers according to various traits. The present study adopted this method to present nine speech samples (see section 4.6.3 for details of the samples).

The matched guise test, and the verbal guise variation of it, have been by far the most prevalent methods used in eliciting language attitude data in previous studies. They have provided the basis for the established findings of language attitude studies which have been shown to be consistent in many regions and in a range of contexts, that is to say that standard speakers of a language are favoured in terms of status traits whilst speakers of non-standard varieties may be favoured in terms of social attractiveness (e.g., Fuertes et al., 2012, Edwards 2011, Giles and Billings 2004, Stewart Ryan and Giles 1985).

The original matched guise experiment (Lambert et al 1960) used a bilingual speaker of French and English, thus using authentic speech in both guises. In the present study, where responses were sought to different voices from a localised area as well as speakers from the wider region, imitation would be required if one speaker were to produce all of the voices. The verbal guise test, by using 'authentic' speakers of each variety overcomes some of the problems posed by the matched guise test, in which one speaker would be required to mimic all of the varieties. As it was unlikely that any single speaker would be able to produce all of the varieties accurately, a verbal guise test using multiple speakers was considered a more appropriate method.

A potential drawback to the verbal guise test is that by using different speakers, the researcher is no longer controlling for other variables of voice quality which could be due to individual speaker differences rather than to the variety. Therefore, in the research instrument designed for the present study, the recording of the speech samples took social variables and acoustic similarity into account (see section 4.6.3 for full details).

In order to control for the content of the speech, speakers are commonly asked to read a prepared passage. In this way, the researcher can eliminate the influence of subject matter which may be more intrinsically interesting to the listener, which might possibly have an effect on evaluations of the speaker. However, as noted by McKenzie (2010), evaluations of a reading voice are likely to differ from evaluations of spontaneous speech. The speakers provide both reading voice and spontaneous speech in the voice samples used in the present study.

The verbal guise task in the present research used a new speech stimulus elicitation task which was devised to record spontaneous speech which would be limited in topic but would be relevant and of interest to the listener judges. This speech stimulus was intended to be appropriate for a specific context in which listener judges would be prepared to evaluate speakers and, indirectly, their speech variety. Full details of this context, the reasons for the choice and the implications for the materials designed are given in section 4.6. The actual materials appear in Appendix A, and the accompanying PowerPoint instructions in Appendix B.

4.4.2. The keyword task

This task eschews the widely used semantic differential scale in favour of a 'keyword task' in which participants respond to an open question, 'The speaker sounds…' by supplying three adjectives or phrases. There are clearly advantages to using a semantic differential scale, particularly in that data collected in this way are more readily compared with results of previous studies (Zahn and Hopper 1985). The ensuing data sets would also be less messy for analysis purposes than those elicited from the keyword task selected. However, the keyword technique used by Garrett, Coupland and Williams (2003) offers a suitable methodology for eliciting open-ended data which is still relatively quick to administer and can be categorised and analysed quantitatively. Previous language attitudes research has often used a word association task to produce a collection of terms from which semantic differential scales can be constructed, as adjectives collected from comparable participants ensure that the meanings of trait descriptors are shared by the participants (e.g., McKenzie, 2008a, 2008b, 2010). Generally, the most frequently occurring words would be selected for such scales as they are considered to be the most pertinent within the context.

This ‘keyword’ task, as used by Garrett et al in a Welsh context, (Garrett et al 2003) is included in the present study for four reasons. Immediate cognitive responses can be gathered which, as a result of the high level of spontaneity in making the judgements, arguably tap into implicit associations (Hofmann et al 2005). Thus, the aim of the question is to allow a fast response, quickly jotting down the first thing that comes into the participant’s mind, rather than a slower response which requires further mental processing in allocating the scale criteria to the voice and making a decision on the degree of each response. Secondly, the completely open choice of adjectives may elicit a different repertoire of evaluation than a list of adjectives on a scale, which may diverge from those elicited by a pre-selected collection of traits. Thirdly, the relative importance of some elements of the repertoire is obscured in a multi-item semantic scale, where most respondents will provide an answer for all items, regardless of whether these items are of equal importance for them. Where a multi-item scale is used, in the ensuing statistical analysis the values measured for all traits would be given equal statistical weighting, regardless of whether these ratings were given spontaneously as a response to the speech sample or were prompted by the terms of the question. All of the above reasons point to a richer data set which may or may not replicate the ‘big two’ dimensions identified in previous study. Furthermore, not only may connecting to and distancing from others be evidenced in thematic evaluation of keyword data, but ways of doing so could also be interpreted.

4.4.3. The speaker ratings.

Having sought entirely spontaneous responses in Question 1, it was the aim of Question 2 to elicit responses more directly comparable to the findings of previous research. Participants rate the speakers according to two traits, which correspond to the two main dimensions previously found across a range of attitude studies in various regions and contexts i.e., status and social attractiveness. The finalised form of this question is detailed in section 4.6.6.2.

4.4.4. Degree of difference

In order to find out whether the more local voices were ‘claimed’ by the participant group, a degree of difference item was included in the responses to the speaker stimulus. Preston (2010) has suggested that difference from the listener’s *own speech* triggers language

regard. The degree of difference task in the perceptual dialectology tradition asks participants to rate speech areas on a 4 -point scale to indicate degree of difference from typical speech of the home area. Thus, perceptual dialectology findings reflect areas where different ways of speaking are perceived to exist and the degree to which they differ from prototypical local ways of speaking, which may not correspond with perceived difference from their own voice. In the present study the participant is asked to indicate the degree of difference from *their own voice* in response to each speaker. Coupland and Bishop (2007), in their 'Voices' study among UK informants of reactions to 34 varieties of English, found 'an accent identical to my own' to be the most favoured of all voices. However surprisingly few studies have used such a measure to establish whether participants consider the speakers to have similar voices to their own, when making evaluations. The finalised form of this question is detailed in section 4.6.6.3.

4.4.5. The local area affiliation question: Relational analogue scale

A visual analogue scale measures subjective responses along a horizontal line representing a continuum between two extreme end points. Participants place a mark along the line at the position they think represents their response. This can subsequently be converted to a score by measuring the distance between one of the extreme end points and the mark. In the relational analogue scale, a series of marks can be drawn along a single line. This instrument, developed by Carmen Llamas and Dominic Watt to investigate the relative strength of reported local, regional or national identities in a border context, was selected as an equally effective tool for analysing reported identity in the non-border location of the present research (Llamas and Watt 2014). It was considered important to allow respondents a means of reporting multiple identities rather than assuming that they could be assigned to one specific geographically bounded identity group.

The decision was taken to use a relational analogue scale rather than a series of Likert scale statement responses for two main reasons: the relational analogue scale a) allows greater freedom to express finer grained differences in responses; and b) allows for relative distances between identity labels to be measured as well as ranking.

Piloting of the tool was carried out (see section 4.5.3) to ascertain whether for at least some respondents the wider identities which they were able to report using this scale were salient. The scale adapted for use in the current context is shown in section 4.6.6.4, in figure 4.7.

4.4.6. The voice affiliation question: Visual analogue scale

Previous research has suggested that language use among young people may be changing in the direction of a supraregional variety, at least in terms of use of specific variants The voice affiliation question was planned to discover whether participants oriented towards local or wider regional expressions of their own linguistic identity. Visual analogue scales were selected to directly elicit levels of agreement with statements of affiliation. Each scale comprises an unmarked horizontal line on which participants place a mark indicating their level of agreement with a statement of identity. In this case, two such scales were selected. The two items were presented separately so that the participant would not feel that they were being asked to make a binary choice between contradictory identity labels but were free to affiliate with either, both or neither. The final form of this scale is shown in section 4.6.6.4, in figure 4.8.

4.5. The pilot study

As the instrument was specifically designed for use at the particular data collection site, each of the elements of the design underwent piloting trials before the design was finalised. Firstly, the pilot addressed soundness of the instrument in terms of comprehensibility of instructions and clarity of response options. Secondly it was important to ensure the feasibility of the procedures for implementation of the data collection tasks, given that logistical arrangements might prove to be far from straightforward. Thirdly, piloting helped to clarify the extent of data that would be useful or necessary to address the research questions. The pilot studies made an essential, integral contribution to the development of the instrument for the main data collection.

4.5.1. Matters addressed by piloting

Section 4.4 outlined the study design which was decided upon after the pilot trialling process. However, at the start of the process of research instrument design, a wider-ranging project was envisaged. It had been my intention to use a more comprehensive

battery of methods to elicit perceptions not only among the core participant cohort, but additionally to compare findings with two other cohorts. That is to say, the piloting involved additional elements which were not included in the final study design (as detailed in section 4.6).

One of the chief outcomes of extensive piloting was to restrict the scope of the project whilst still operationalising the key research questions. A decision was made to remove the comparative groups from the present study due to limitations of time. Further restrictions to the range of diverse methods of data collection were also considered during the piloting stage. In addition to the core data (comprising three sets of responses to the speech stimulus instrument and the two affiliation questions as outlined in section 4.4.), additional materials were trialled. The broader range of methods included 'draw a map' tasks and focus group discussions. To avoid confusion, I have not included details in Figure 4-2, of the full range of piloting trials conducted. Moreover, the subsequent discussion will only expand on the elements which relate to features eventually used in the finalised study.

.	Task type	Potential issues investigated in pilot sessions	
1.	Response to speech stimulus task	Willingness/ability of participants to comment on speakers Suitability of speech stimulus speakers Suitability of speech stimulus content Timeframe needed for responses	Suitability of tasks for age group
2.	Scoring	Wording of evaluative dimensions Appropriate wording for scales User-friendliness of scales	
3.	Affiliation questionnaire	Wording of the questions Suitability of magnitude scales	

Figure 4-2 The potential issues which the pilot studies were intended to identify

Section 4.5.2 reports the pilot sessions which were used to inform the design of the speech stimulus instrument, and section 4.5.3 comments on the testing of the affiliation scale design.

4.5.2. The speech stimulus task

The speech stimulus was designed to include representative speakers of urban varieties of English spoken at four 'nested' levels of locality, i.e., local (Geordie), area (north-east), regional (northern) and national ('standard'). Where perceptual dialectology studies have made use of a speech stimulus, these have sometimes been taken from existing corpora of dialect speech (eg. Braber 2015, Montgomery 2007). The examples of speech from different localities are rarely, however, controlled for intervening variables as is the norm in language attitude research tradition and many are not up to date.

For the purposes of piloting, two different types of speech stimulus were prepared. Both of the speech stimuli included the recorded voices of speakers from different parts of the north of England. The first set of recordings was taken from the British Library archive. A second set of recordings was prepared using speakers from the youtube 'accent tag challenge'. After considering the limitations of these stimulus materials, a new speech stimulus instrument was developed for the main data collection. A detailed account of the development of the speech stimulus instrument appears in section 4.6.

The British Library archive holds extensive records of spoken voice samples, which could be used to source the examples of different regional voices required for the speech stimulus. However, in an instrument designed to test attitudes to regional varieties, it would seem advisable to control for as many potentially intervening variables as possible. The range of regional varieties was complicated by a range of speaker ages and of topic content, which made selection of suitable voices difficult. Moreover, many of the recordings are now several years old. As noted in chapter 1, dialectological research in the region suggests a levelling process is underway, particularly among younger speakers, so it would seem less likely that older recordings would be recognised as being representative of the speech of modern young people.

A selection of voices was played to a group of students in a classroom situation to elicit keyword adjectives or phrases. The responses were spoken spontaneously and recorded by the researcher as field notes. The intention was firstly to assess whether the participants were able and willing to offer opinions about speakers. Secondly the responses were to

be checked to see if they reflected the adjectives popularly used in semantic differential scales in previous research.

The speakers for the second stimulus were young people performing the accent tag challenge on youtube. The videos are a 'tag' which means that a person completes the challenge and uploads their video. They then 'tag', or nominate, another person to complete the challenge. The challenge itself consists of three sections. There is a reading list task where speakers read out a list of words. This is followed by a set of questions eliciting lexical items. Thirdly the speaker reads from a story of their choice. The challenge is based on a survey originally conducted at Harvard University, to investigate phonological differences and lexical variation in American English speech (Vaux 2002). The survey questions have since been taken up as an internet phenomenon internationally, so although the word list and questions are designed to elicit variants in American English, examples are no longer restricted to American speakers. The speech samples used in the pilot were chosen as they were young people performing in a vlog context that would be familiar to teenagers. It was expected that this performance context would elicit responses to the person, as intended in the implicit elicitation task. Extracts were taken from the relatively spontaneous speech in answer to the set questions.

The speech stimulus material showed that:

- Pupils engaged very readily with the modern speaker samples of young people.
- Pupils offered a diverse range of responses
- Pupils spontaneously commented on accent features of the speakers as well as making evaluations of the person.
- Pupils had no reservations about making judgements of the speakers
- Pupils wanted to discuss their impressions of each speaker out loud rather than write comments on paper.
- Pupils could not respond to as many voices in the time allowed as had been anticipated.

The piloting session therefore suggested that a speech stimulus could be used to elicit judgements of varieties. The question-and-answer 'tag' format was a successful way of eliciting speech samples which included key phonological variants of each variety as well as natural spontaneous speech. However, as the tags comprised overtly metalinguistic commentary, it was unlikely that implicit evaluations could be elicited using this material.

An adaptation of the question-and-answer format was therefore designed, using a suitable context and content for the recorded speech. (Details of the newly developed speech stimulus task are given in full in section 4.6)

The piloting also suggested that open ended responses were needed to capture the evaluations of the participants. Responses such as 'sounds like an old gadgie' and 'sounds drunk' seemed to confirm the decision that keywords would be potentially more illuminating than the 'tidied up' versions of responses offered by a semantic differential scale (Garrett 2010).

4.5.3. The affiliation questionnaires

Another pilot session tested the affiliation questionnaire. The questions were projected on the smartboard at the front of the classroom. The researcher demonstrated how to fill in the relational analogue scale for question 3 by demonstrating on the smartboard how to mark the vertical lines. These were then intended to be erased while the participants completed their own response to question 3, so that the positioning of lines on the example scale would not influence placement of lines in the responses. However, given the tendency for participants to seek reassurance and confirmation that they were doing the right thing, it was considered preferable to have a clear example of how to complete question 3 of the questionnaire task in place whilst the respondents completed it. The researcher was also able to point out that the lines do not need to be equally spaced and also that the whole of the scale can be used. Pupils then completed question 4 in the same way as the previous question by placing vertical lines as directed. Further demonstration was not needed for question 4.

The questionnaire showed that:

- One or two pupils in a class of 30 needed further explanation to complete the scales. As a result, a PowerPoint slide was designed demonstrating how to fill in the relational analogue scale.
- All of the identity labels were meaningful to the participants
- Many pupils identified an 'other' identity affiliation. It was decided to offer this option in the final design.

Some follow-up questions were also asked of individuals who had taken part in the sessions to clarify whether they had found any difficulties in completing the tasks, and to invite comment. Developments of the study design were also made on the basis of

observations and questioning during pilot sessions which served two purposes: to identify ambiguities or difficulties and also to inform selection of wording which would be appropriate and meaningful for participants.

4.6. **Research instrument development**

Following the piloting of materials, the research instrument underwent modification. The speech stimulus was specifically designed for this project and was intended to elicit attitudinal information indirectly, from participants who were unaware that accented speech was the focus of study. Therefore, in the development of the research instrument, there were choices to be made regarding the arrangements for creating appropriate conditions in the data collection sessions, the design of the participant worksheets and several decisions concerning design of the speech stimulus instrument.

4.6.1. The design features of the specifically recorded speech stimulus instrument

The speech stimulus instrument for the intended main study was designed bearing in mind the factors that appeared to be strengths during the pilot study procedure. The following five factors were considered beneficial in the speech stimulus design:

4.6.1.1. *Natural speech*

One of the advantages of the accent tag clips used in pilot study 2, was that the relatively natural speech engaged pupils. It was decided that the speech samples to be used in the main study should include similarly spontaneous speech.

4.6.1.2. *Young speakers*

Another engaging factor was the age of the example speakers. Although the youtubers were somewhat older than the younger participants, the listeners responded on personal level, as if they had met the speaker and were commenting on their impressions. It was decided therefore that young speakers would be more valuable than examples of traditional dialect from older speakers.

4.6.1.3. *Visual information*

The video clips used for the pilot study elicited responses from participants to the appearance as well as the voices of individuals. The visual information and the sounds of speech appeared to play an interconnected role in making judgements about the speakers.

Video clips were played in two modes, with the screen turned either on or off. In the 'off' mode, when the sound was heard alone, participants were still willing to make judgements about the speakers. Although there is an argument to be made for investigating the part language plays in combination with visual information in perceptions of people, it was decided that for the purposes of this study, such information would be a potentially interfering variable. Therefore, audio recordings would need to be played without the visual representation of the speaker.

4.6.1.4. *Neutral topic*

The listeners freely offered responses to the speaker. Even though the content of the speeches was specifically about language varieties, the participants still offered responses to the speaker rather than explicit judgements of the accent. However, it was deemed likely that for this part of the research, where an implicit judgement of varieties would be sought, there would be an increased likelihood of this type of judgement being made if the variety of speech were not to be highlighted as the topic content. A suitable neutral topic was therefore needed.

4.6.1.5. *Controlled content*

The sections of the accent tag that had been useful in the piloting were spontaneous speech in answer to a set of questions. Controlling for similarity of content is therefore assured by the constraints of the questions. Whereas tag speakers had been taking part in a challenge and their deliberate conscious performance of their accent is recorded, the new design aimed to record voices where the production of the accent would be unwitting.

In consideration of these factors, it was decided that the speech stimulus should use a modification of the 'tag' question and answer format, using a suitable content for the recorded speech adapted for the context.

4.6.2. The context of the new recordings

As detailed in section 4.3, the responses of an older teenage group would provide data to address the research questions. An appropriate context for this group was therefore created both for the recording of voice samples and for the collection of data. In the selected context, speakers were asked to provide answers to frequently asked questions about university life and living away from home. This context was selected because it is familiar and relevant to the 6th form pupils in the school situation. The regular programme of 6th form planning for progression would include visits to university open days where

current university students would talk about university life, and students also make visits to school for question-and-answer sessions. For the performer, the content and context are intended to distract from conscious production of their accent, whilst for the listener the same context and content should similarly distract from overt judgement of the accent.

The question-and-answer format used in the accent tag challenge was reproduced in this context. Prior to recording, speakers were aware that their recordings would be part of research concerned with impression-formation, but unaware that accented speech was the focus of the research (see 4.7 for ethical considerations). Recruited speakers were told that the researcher was interested in the impressions that school students form of university when listening to visiting speakers.

In order to provide appropriate and similar content in recordings, all speakers answered questions asking for basic factual information about their student accommodation. The topic was selected as a suitable subject for older school-aged listeners, most of whom would be considering the prospect of living away from home for the first time.

4.6.3. The recordings of the speech varieties

Speech varieties were recorded at Northumbria University in March 2017, using a Sony IC dictaphone recorder. The recorder was placed on a table between the researcher and the speaker. Ten question cards were placed face-down on a table between the researcher and the speaker. The speaker turned over cards at random, read the question aloud and then answered spontaneously.

Recordings were edited in the digital suite at Northumbria University, using Adobe Audition software. The waveform editing view was used to select speech samples of approximately 30 seconds duration. Sections of the recording were selected which would comprise complete questions and answers, as incomplete answers to questions would be likely to influence listener judgements of speakers. Thus, some variation in duration of speech samples in length was necessary. Selected clips varied between a minimum duration of 30 seconds and a maximum of 35 seconds (details for each recording are included with the transcripts in Appendix C). Noises from turning the question cards was edited out using the oscilloscope trace, as it was more precise than clipping the file whilst listening. Pauses between questions were also edited out, but no other manipulations of the recording were undertaken, to avoid interference with the authenticity of speech.

The sound clips were judged for similarity impressionistically by ear before the software was used to check the sections of the text also shared acoustic similarity. The software's waveform view displays an oscilloscope trace, showing volume and pitch. Volume is shown by the height of the waves displayed. The larger the amplitude of the waves, the louder the sound. Pitch is shown by the spacing of the waves displayed. The closer together the waves are, the higher the pitch of the sound. I used the oscilloscope trace from the programme to roughly judge that volume and pitch were not excessively different between speakers.

4.6.4. The content of the new recordings

4.6.4.1. *Voice authenticity*

A verbal guise speech instrument is far likelier to represent authentic speech than an attempt by any one speaker to produce several voices, although this popular adaptation of the matched guise technique does not control as closely for potential effects of differences in speech other than the variety or accent, such as speech rate and pitch.

Although regional varieties of speech are characterised by distinctiveness in phonology, lexis and grammar (e.g., Trudgill 1983), accent alone has been demonstrated to be a powerful influence on impression formation (e.g., Rakic et al 2011). The design of the speech stimulus therefore should include examples of particular vowels or consonants which are known to index the speech of the relevant varieties. Real-time measures of responses to speakers have shown that certain segmental features can cause within-speaker variation in responses (Watson and Clarke 2015). Evaluative responses could be more or less favourable in response to particularly salient variants for the variety in question. Therefore, it was important that the speech stimulus should not be too limited in duration, allowing for a range of variants to be used, as it was not the intention to isolate evaluations of specific segmental features, but rather to elicit responses to a representative speaker of the variety. The segmental features which were included in the design, were intended to facilitate recognition of the variety and were not considered independently as variables. Suprasegmental features such as clarity, intonation, fluency and pauses could not be fully controlled. Neither was it considered necessary to do so, as suprasegmentals as well as pronunciation are relevant features of perceived accent. The researcher was looking for natural spontaneous speech from a representative speaker of each variety, as judged by members of their own speech community. It was assumed that the panel of

local judges would make their diagnosis to some extent on the basis both of segmental and prosodic features.

The questions were designed to elicit some of the most salient variants in Newcastle speech and some of the most recognisable variants in other northern regional varieties, in order to record recognisable speech samples. The variants selected are shown in Figure 4-3. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, specific variants were not the focus of the research.

Lexical set	Example in question list
TRAP /BATH	Q5 bathroom Q9 ask, staff
PUT/ STRUT	Q3 done, enough Q7 up Q8 money
GOAT	Q6 mostly Q7 posters, photos, home Q8 broken
FACE	Q4 space Q7 make Q8 pay, replaced
MOUTH	Q1 house Q4 out Q7 allowed
NURSE	Q3 work Q10 first
START	Q2 far Q7 are
SQUARE	Q5 share
GOOSE/FOOT	Q 6 cooking, Q10 look
happY	Q2 Uni, Q9 any
lettER	Q4 papers Q7 posters
Glottalised word-medial p, t, k	Q4 papers Q7 photos Q8 broken
Ing	Q6 Cooking Q8 anything Q10 choosing

Figure 4-3 The selected variants

4.6.4.2. ***The Questions:***

1. Do you live in student halls, a flat or a house?
2. Is your accommodation far from uni?
3. Is it quiet enough to get some work done?
4. Is there space to spread out your books and papers?
5. Is your room ensuite or do you share a bathroom?
6. Do you mostly do your own cooking or get a meal out?
7. Are you allowed to put up photos and posters on the walls to make yourself feel at home?
8. If anything gets broken, will you have to pay extra money to get it replaced?
9. Can you ask any staff for help if there are any problems?
10. What's your top tip for first years- what should they look for when they are choosing a place to live?

4.6.4.3. ***Content neutrality***

Whilst the authenticity of the speaker voice and the potential confounding effects from other factors are of primary concern for the verbal guise research design, these are not the only considerations. Neutrality of the text has presented another issue to be considered in speech stimulus design. Repeated readings of the same text might influence responses to later readings when familiarity and boredom may interfere with judgements. On the other hand, varied texts may differ in the interest of the content, again influencing judgements. The content of the speeches was a question-and-answer session, where the speakers answer a set of frequently asked questions. In each recording the speaker reads each question then gives a short answer. Spontaneous answers to questions potentially give variable social information about the speakers and could, therefore, act as additional cues for evaluation. Care was taken to avoid this risk. The content is relatively controlled by the questions, which focus on basic provision in university accommodation which is a commonly shared experience for most students. Answers to questions would be highly unlikely to betray cues about social information which might influence responses to the speakers. Moreover, these questions were appropriate because all speakers would be able to answer confidently, as all would be equally expert in the topic of their own living accommodation. In any case, had some such cues been found in the recordings, selection of clips of only 30 seconds duration would also allow this problem to be minimised in the

editing process. The questions themselves elicit a reading voice and the answers allow for relatively spontaneous speech.

4.6.5. Choice of speakers

4.6.5.1. *Selected varieties*

The varieties to be included in the speech stimulus design were chosen giving consideration to the literature reviewed in chapters 1, 2 and 3. The varieties were chosen on the basis that they are ways of speaking in the major urban locations at the four levels of locality. At a national level, the capital city of London was considered to be the most appropriate choice for selection of a 'standard' British speaker. At the regional level, voices from five 'northern powerhouse' cities of Newcastle, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, and Sheffield were chosen. These cities were selected for recent research into the convergence of usage towards General Northern English (Strycharczuk et al 2020). The same city labels were used by McKenzie and Carrie (2018) to represent northern ways of speaking, selected on the basis that they were the most frequently named northern varieties amongst a Newcastle pilot participant group. The cities of Middlesbrough and Sunderland were chosen as north east area variety locations, in addition to the home local voice of Newcastle upon Tyne, as these three city varieties emerged as perceptually salient in previous perceptual dialectology work carried out in the north-east (Pearce, 2009).

4.6.5.2. *Control of interfering variables*

One issue arising from use of the verbal guise instrument is that as more than one speaker is used, accented speech may not be the only between-speaker variable. Therefore, in the research instrument designed for the present study, as well as considering acoustic similarity, the speech sample was controlled for several social variables all of which could have an effect on voice quality and potentially, as a consequence, on evaluations. In order to reduce interference from other factors, the speech sample was controlled for age, gender, ethnicity, and educational level of the speaker. Speakers' ages ranged between 18 and 20 years old, and so were close in age to the participant group of listener judges. (One speaker's date of birth was not supplied, but this speaker was also a 19-year-old second-year student.) Speakers of this age were considered most suitable, as older speakers may not be considered representative of modern local speech. All were undergraduate students at Northumbria university. This controlled not only for educational level and to some

extent for any social factors that may be related to university choice. There has been a tendency in language attitudes studies to select speakers of only one gender, and as only one speaker of each variety was to be chosen, and attitudes may vary towards speakers of different genders, only male speakers were selected. For the same reason, as ethnicity would present an additional variable, all selected speakers were white British. Speaker self-identification in relation to categories of ethnicity or gender was not taken into consideration in this study, as the focus was not on the influence of self-perceptions of speakers on production, but on the perceptions of listeners in response to speakers of different varieties of speech. In the same vein, self-categorisation of social class information was not sought.

4.6.5.3. ***Speaker authenticity***

The issue of speaker prototypicality also presents concerns for the research design. The responses can more robustly be attributed to the speech community represented by the speaker rather than to the idiolect of the particular example if more than one speaker is presented for evaluation from each speech group. This means that there would be double the number of speech samples, running the risk of listener fatigue. A balance must be decided between the number of varieties to be presented and the number of speakers of each variety. It was decided that the research instrument for the present study would include only one speaker of each variety, due to the range of varieties to be presented and the value as explained above of including a sizeable excerpt of speech from each. Listening time would otherwise have been excessive, particularly as the implementation of the task required participants to listen to the speech stimulus three times. An exception was made for the Newcastle variety, where two recordings were included. As mentioned in section 4.5.1, the original study design included analysis of draw-a-map tasks, and it had been my intention to look at perceived linguistic differences between highly localised geographical places within Newcastle itself. The inclusion of speakers from the east and from the west of Newcastle reflected the element of the study design which sought to identify whether ingroup of local voices operated on such a highly localised basis.

The speakers were selected by informal screening interviews prior to recording. In a folklinguistic study, the folk perception of the speakers' voices in their own local area seemed appropriate as a qualification for authenticity, a rationale shared by McKenzie (2010). McKenzie drew on an extensive corpus of speakers and asked a panel of local people in the area to judge which of the speakers seemed to be most typical of local ways

of speaking. In the present study, access to folk comment on each speaker's voice was sought through the screening interview. The informal interviews ascertained three qualifying criteria:

- the speaker, until arriving at university, had been living in the designated locations
- the speaker believed their own voice to be typical of the location where they lived
- other people in their home town recognised they had a local voice
- other people in Newcastle had commented on their voice being from elsewhere.

The speakers offered comment on the ways in which their voice has been described both in their home locations and in Newcastle, some of which are reproduced in Figure 4-4.

Speaker	City	D.O.B.	Comments about own speech
Speaker 1	Newcastle (W)	Not given	I am really proud to be a Geordie so I think that's me, true Geordies are like me so west end of Newcastle is where Geordie speech is. Other people might say like in the east but like I want it to be where I am from.
Speaker 2	Leeds	28/03/97	People say all the time. They can tell I have got a different voice I don't mind. I don't want to change the way I speak. I definitely think I have got a Leeds voice. Yes, people a home would say I talk like I am from there. That's where I would say I am from, yeh, definitely Leeds.
Speaker 3	Liverpool	24/01/97	Yes, people say about my voice all the time. They think I'm really scouse but when I am back in Liverpool my voice is not as scouse as a lot of people. It is not as rough.
Speaker 4	London	07/01/96	People think I am posh. I get called a southern c word all the time. People assume I am from the other uni because of the way I speak. I wouldn't like to go to that university because it is too traditional. The inter-varsity games are called posh v. poly, so that says it all.

Speaker5	Manchester	21/05/95	Everyone would know straight away I was from Manchester. We both stand out here. There's not many people from Manchester. Everyone says they can tell I am not a Geordie. Yes, they usually can tell where I am from. I think everyone where I come from; all the people I went to school with sound pretty much like me. We aren't all Liam Gallagher.
Speaker6	Middlesbrough	02/11/95	Yes, everyone knows my accent is from Middlesbrough. People here know I am not a Geordie. They would never think I am a Geordie. They can tell it is a Middlesbrough voice, yes. At home everyone would say I talk like one of them. People would describe my voice as Smoggie.
Speaker7	Newcastle (E)	20/02/96	I am definitely Geordie 100%. I love having a Geordie voice. I can be more Geordie when I am back home. I would say where I am from is Geordie.
Speaker8	Sheffield	05/01/96	Yes people talk about it all the time. Everyone can hear that I am not a Geordie, and they notice I don't say 'the'. I just leave it out and I say the aitch on words.
Speaker9	Sunderland	24/09/96	Everyone can tell I am from the north east. Yes, people do say I am a Mackem. People from Sunderland can tell and people from Newcastle can tell. Further into the centre of Sunderland would be more of an accent. They sound more rough.

Figure 4-4 The selected speakers and their comments about their own voice

Comments on their own speech include beliefs about whether their voices are regional, are typical of their locality, and whether their local voices are socially stigmatised. All speakers assert that they can be identified as belonging to a specific city, apart from the speaker from London who says he is identified as 'southern'. Speakers from Leeds and Manchester and Sheffield used the name of their home city to describe their voices, whereas five of the speakers refer to ethnonyms used to identify speakers of their variety.

Both of the Newcastle speakers describe themselves as Geordie. The Middlesbrough speaker uses the word ‘Smoggie’ to label how he would be described by others. Similarly, the Sunderland speaker says others would refer to him as ‘Mackem’. The Liverpool speaker does not refer to himself as a Scouser but describes his speech as ‘scouse’.

However, some comments indicate conflict between affirming place orientation and rejecting association with stereotypes of local speech. The speakers from Liverpool and Sunderland differentiate their voices from others in their home towns who they perceive to have voices that are ‘rough’. By stating ‘We aren’t all like Liam Gallagher’ the Manchester speaker distances himself from a well-known celebrity Mancunian who may also be perceived as ‘rough’, staking a claim for his own way of speaking as a valid representation of his local area. The London speaker is the only one to report negative responses to his voice. His comments indicate a perceived lack of fit between his voice and his student contemporaries. In order to minimise salience of within-group difference, he finds reason to distance himself from the ‘other uni’ where similarly ‘posh’ students from the south are expected to be found.

A transcript of the speech sample excerpts presented in the final speech stimulus is available in Appendix C.

The excerpts were verified as recognisable speakers of each designated area by small focus groups of adult local listeners. In each case the speakers were identified as moderately accented on a three-point scale of broad, moderate and slight. To limit the influence of social factors on these judgements, the focus groups all comprised educated middle-aged speakers. Therefore, it was assumed that the level of accentedness was to some extent controlled in the study.

4.6.6. Development of the participant worksheets

4.6.6.1. *The keyword elicitation question*

As outlined above (section 4.4.2), the research instrument elicited three sets of data in response to the speech stimulus. Following piloting of this method, the wording of the keyword elicitation was retained. Question 1 elicited keywords in response to each speaker using the prompt ‘The speaker sounds…’

This prompt allows for open ended responses that could be single adjectives or longer phrases. Previously, responses have been limited to three keyword responses (Garret et al 2003) or to five responses (Garret et al 2006). In the present study, three responses per speaker was considered appropriate for two reasons. Firstly, the instrument is intended to capture spontaneous impressions of speaker, from which attitudinal information can be interpreted. In piloting, three seemed to be the limit of spontaneous impressions. Students started to spend longer thinking when more answers were required. Secondly, a limitation of three responses was considered to be less onerous for participants and ran less risk of listener fatigue.

4.6.6.2. ***The wording of the speaker rating question and design of the scale response***

The speaker judgement task asked participants to evaluate each speaker along the 'big two' dimensions previously found to be important in person perception (e.g., Abele & Wojciszke, 2018 & Fiske, 2018). In order to minimise the discomfort that pupils may feel about being asked to make a judgement of another person, the decision was made to present the question as a selection task, rating the speaker as a representative creating an impression of the university.

Whilst previous language attitude studies over the last sixty years have found that informants readily provide judgements of speakers, which indirectly access attitudes to the variety of speech, a modern listener may be far less willing to do so. Bucholtz et al (2008) point to evidence of 'political correctness' in collecting judgements of a speaker. Therefore, wording of the question in the present study was carefully chosen to minimise this potential problem. The two dimensions were introduced as factors influencing university choice: 'high ranking' and 'friendly'. Whilst participants may be reluctant to attribute rank to an individual, they are accustomed to considering universities in such terms. Students are well aware of league tables with regard to university rankings and also of school performance league tables. Therefore, the label 'high ranking university' was chosen as a generic concept which could entail all of the trait attributes relating to status. Thus, participants were then able to access whichever traits were most meaningful to them when rating the speaker, which was deemed preferable to limiting their responses to pre-selected trait descriptors which might not be most pertinent for individuals in the context. Likewise, the social attractiveness dimension was accessed through the generic trait of friendliness.

The wording of this question was designed to maintain the pretext of the task, so that the responses to the speech varieties would remain to some degree implicit. Question 2 asks the participant to rank the speaker using a scale from 1-10 to measure level of agreement with two judgemental statements. The wording chosen for the questions was:

- This person gives an impression of a friendly university.
- This person gives an impression of a high-ranking university.

A ten-point agreement scale was chosen for participants to indicate levels of agreement with the statement. The scale was selected for several reasons. Firstly, as a familiar vernacular scoring system (for instance it is used in the popular TV talent contest 'Strictly Come Dancing' for rating performances), it was easily understood by participants. Also, following Preston and Coleman (2000), a 10-point scale was considered the most useful in order to elicit a full range of responses. Numbers were considered more accurate than verbal descriptors to indicate strength of agreement, as they convey the idea of equal intervals between points, which would be important in quantifying results. Where a longer scale is used, it is more common to label only the endpoints., avoiding subjectivity in interpreting the meaning of word labels for each level of agreement. The labels chosen for each end of the scale needed to indicate the direction of the scale i.e., greater agreement towards number ten. At each end of the scale, it was important to indicate a fixed reference point, such as completely disagree/completely agree, since simply marking 'disagree/ agree' does not indicate the level of agreement. The descriptions chosen were those that were likeliest to make sense to the students, based on piloting observations.

Extremes of the scale were marked 'Disagree totally' and 'Agree totally'. The ratings scale can be seen in Figure 4-5.

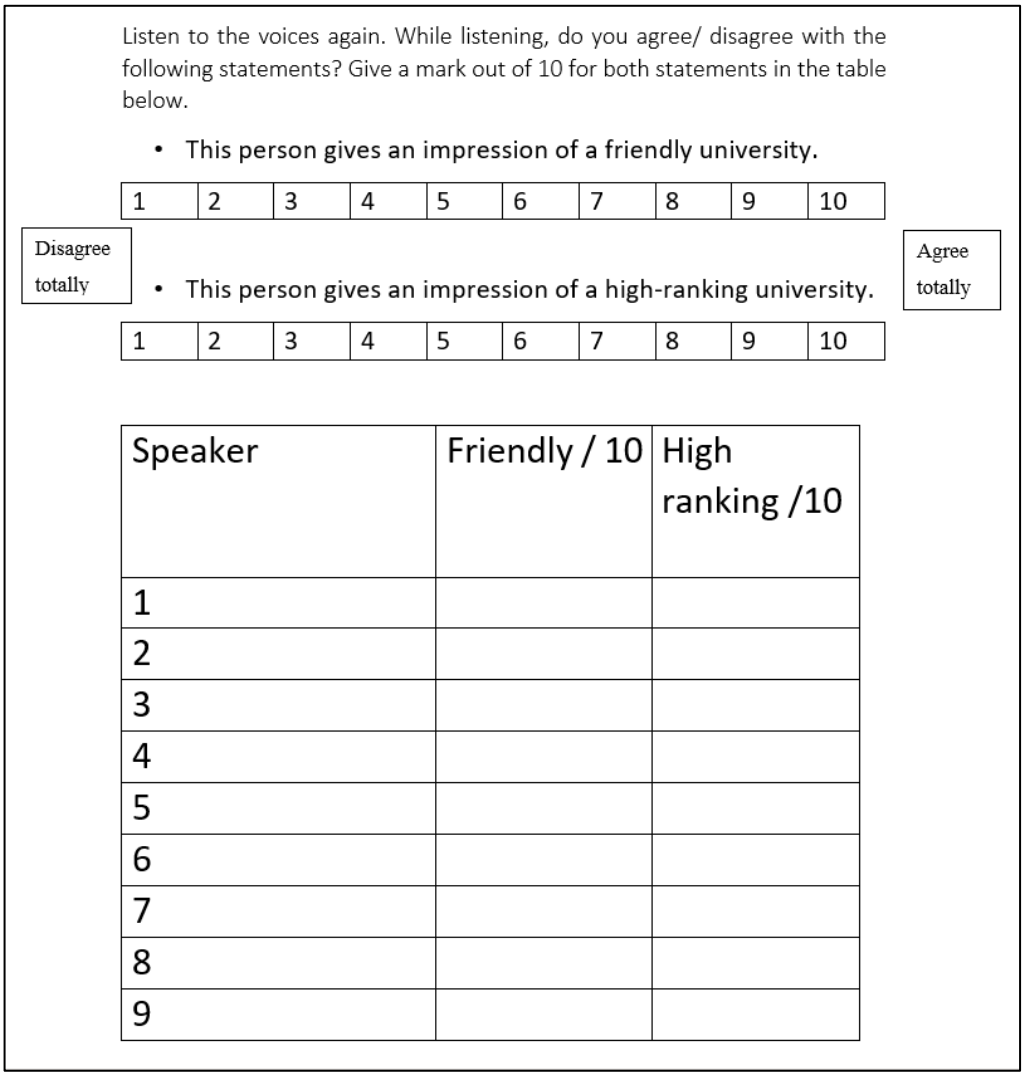

Figure 4-5 The ratings scale

4.6.6.3. ***The degree of difference scale***

The labelling decisions for Q3 rested on the need for the direction of the scale to be clear, and for the end points represented at both extremes of the scale to be unambiguous., to allow the participant to position themselves in relation to the speaker. Wording for extremes of scale needed to show extremes of similarity and difference and allow the participant to position themselves in relation to the speaker. This measure used a 10-point scale, shown in Figure 4-6 for two bipolar statements:

'The speaker sounds exactly like me.' versus

'The speaker sounds totally different from me.'

The pairing was selected on the basis of observation during piloting sessions, drawn from the phrases most frequently used by participants to compare their own voice to the voices of speakers. The alternative pairing 'exactly like me/nothing like me' was considered as another possible wording which would sound natural and be readily understood by the participant group. This pairing, however focussed on likeness rather than degree of difference. In the chosen wording, opposite terms are used rather than only presence or absence of difference. To ensure that participants remain aware that higher scores equate with greater difference, the word is restated in the column heading labelling scoring as 'Sounds different from me out of 10.'

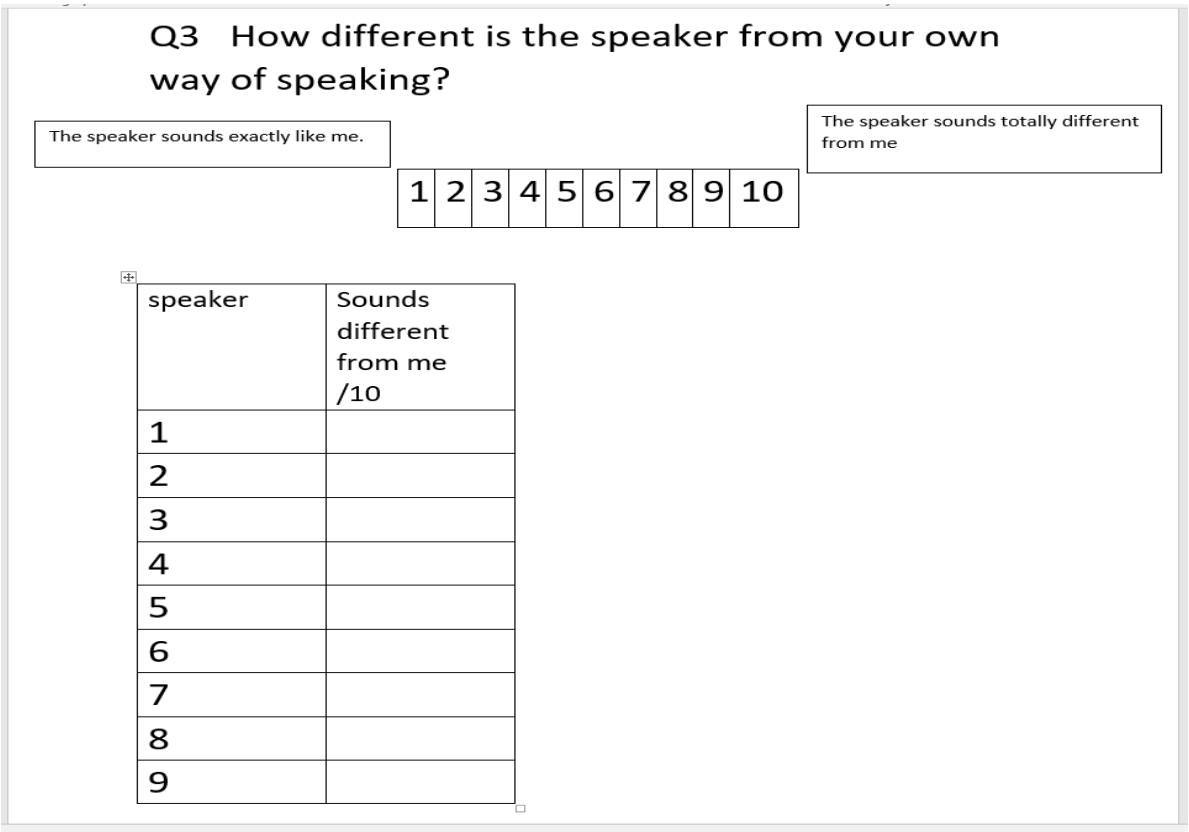

Figure 4-6 The scale used to measure the degree of difference perceived between the participants own voice and each speaker

4.6.6.4. ***The affiliation questions***

These remained unaltered from the materials used in the piloting session. The scales were designed to elicit data to address RQ3, which asks whether ingrouping responses to speakers are also found in directly elicited affiliations. In the border study conducted by Watt and Llamas (2017), identity labels were customised to be relevant to each of the data collection sites, so the analogue scale included different national identity labels (Scottish or English) for those on each side of the border. Following their example, five labels were

selected for the place analogue scale to represent differing levels of locality in the present study. Labels were also customised for the site of the data collection, but as this was a single site, the same labels were presented to each participant. In response to piloting, where additional identities were claimed by participants, a sixth optional 'other' label was added. Figure 4-7 shows the scale adapted for use in the study.

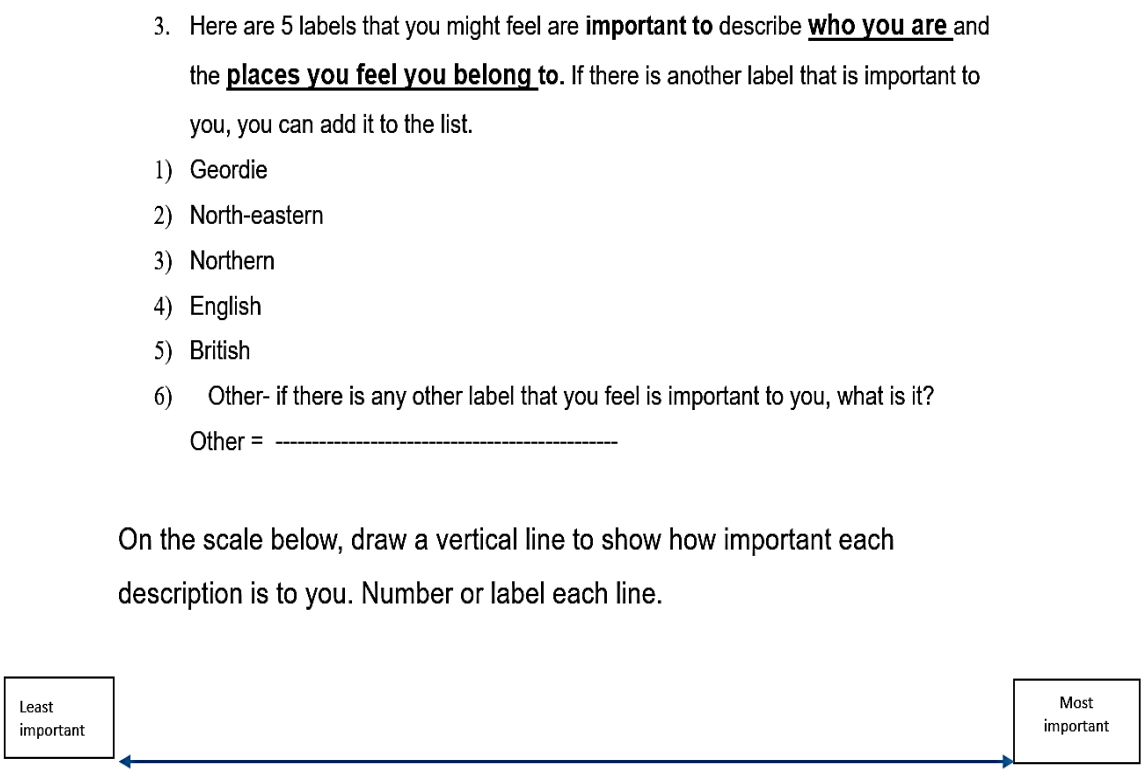

Figure 4-7 The relational analogue scale used to measure affiliation with local place

The speech affiliation question asks for a self-reported judgement about the participants' perception of their own level of affiliation with the speech community. Watts (2002) suggested that usage with greater pan-regional currency might be preferred by younger speakers, and that this modern usage would be considered to be 'northern' in contrast to the more traditional forms labelled 'Geordie'. In order to find out if affiliation with a 'northern' voice identity has become widespread amongst young people, the questions in this item were specifically designed to mirror the terms identified by Watt, asking whether

the participant identified their own voice as ‘northern’ or as ‘Geordie’. A single item visual analogue scale was chosen to measure the degree to which participants agreed with each of the two separate statements of affiliation. Figure 4-8 shows the scale used to measure voice affiliation.

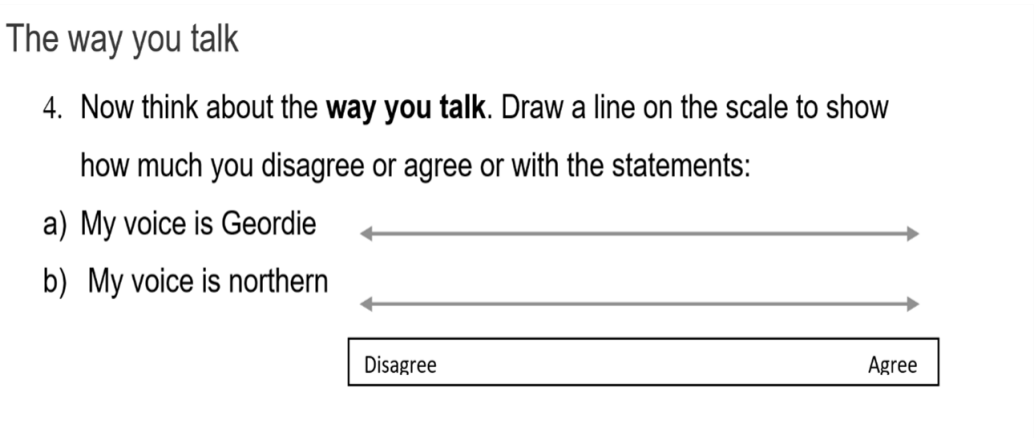

Figure 4-8 The visual analogue scale used to measure affiliation with the local voice

4.7. **Ethical considerations**

Clearance was agreed with the school, that they would be willing for students to take part in the research during school time. Permission was granted by the headteacher and the head of sixth form. Details of the exact tasks (appendix A and B) were shared with all sixth form tutors prior to commencement of the data collection sessions. The university grades projects according to risk level, and as the participant group of the study comprised school aged children under 18 years old, this study was coded red, meaning that higher levels of scrutiny applied, although risk to participants was low.

4.7.1. Risk

The researcher held enhanced DBS clearance, necessary for unsupervised work with children, although other teachers were always present.

The study was deemed very unlikely to cause any distress to individuals. The information elicited was not of a sensitive or intrusive nature. Participants did not need to share their responses with others, so this privacy minimised any potential anxiety.

All of the activities were similar to activities that would take place in any case in the normal school day and did not pose any additional risk that is not already covered by the risk assessments in place within the school. All tasks were agreed by the participating institution and complied with the risk assessment protocol for the institution.

As collection of speaker samples involved one-to-one recording sessions, to minimise any uneasiness, these took place in glass fronted offices adjoining the library, or in quiet public spaces.

4.7.2. Participant information and debriefing

As is the necessary in the tradition of the matched- guise technique, the information supplied at the outset withheld some details, which were then supplied in debriefing, after which written informed consent was sought. This pertained to collection of speaker samples as well as to listener participants.

4.7.2.1. ***Speakers***

Prior to recording, speakers were aware that their recordings would be part of research concerned with impression-formation, but unaware that accented speech was the focus of the research. Recruited speakers were told that the researcher was interested in the impressions that school students form of university when listening to visiting speakers. Speakers were told that the speaker was recruiting a mix of speakers from different places which would give an impression of the diverse student population. They were informed that school students would listen to their voice and give impressions. The recordings then took place. After each recording, the speaker was fully debriefed and given full details of the research topic and of how the recordings would be used. As well as verbal explanation, written information sheets were given to speakers, which they were asked to read through. They were invited to ask any questions and asked if they would still be happy for their voice to be used in the study. All speakers were still happy to proceed.

Once aware that attitudes to accented speech was to be the subject of the study, the speakers informally talked about perceptions of their own accent. Written consent forms were signed. Speakers were paid £10 for their contribution.

4.7.2.2. *Data collection*

Data collection was planned to take place in two sessions, for the whole cohort of both sixth form year groups. Participants were aware that they were providing information to a researcher who was conducting a study about person perception, and the subject would be their impressions of recorded voices. The context provided gave a plausible purpose for collecting their impressions of people, distracting attention from accented speech. All participants were encouraged to take part and fill in the response sheets, but were told that if they did not want to take part in the study, they did not need to hand in their papers at the end. After the first two questions were completed, indirectly eliciting impressions and evaluations, debriefing occurred. This is when students were made aware that the researcher's interest was in their attitudes to speakers of different varieties of English. Information was explained verbally, accompanied by slide 5 on the PowerPoint (Appendix B). Participants were also told that they would be given information to take home and that their information could only be used with their consent. Written information sheets were not given out at this point as they would have potentially been lost, left behind or mixed up with answer sheets. At the end of the session, those participants who were happy to contribute to the research handed in their sheets and were given consent forms in exchange to take away for parental signatures. Information sheets were given out to all students.

As some students were unavailable during these sessions, additional sessions were run with small numbers of students. The researcher conducted all sessions in person, ensuring that all participants were debriefed accurately.

4.7.3. Written informed consent

For speakers, written informed consent was supplied at the time of recording from each speaker.

For responses, as some of the participants in the study were under 18 years old, informed consent was required from parents or guardians in addition to the participants themselves. All participants were given a consent form and a sheet containing additional information, which provided further details about the study. This information included details of the study, the types of information that would be gathered and the ways in which the information would be used. Contact details for the researcher were included to allow for

any further questions. Participants were informed that their participation in the study was not compulsory, and they could withdraw from the study by contacting the researcher.

4.7.4. Anonymity

Confidentiality was assured on the task sheet itself, and participants were reassured at the outset of the tasks that all responses would remain anonymous. However, in order to gain written informed consent, completed consent forms needed to be matched up with data, so that only this data would be retained for use in the study. Therefore, it was necessary to temporarily name response sheets, until consent forms were received. To retain anonymity, responses were afterwards allocated a number rather than including the name of the participant.

4.8. Procedure

The data was collected between January and March 2018 at a school in Newcastle upon Tyne. For details of the informants the reader is referred to section 4.3. The research instrument was a paper and pen task designed to take place in a whole year-group Personal Social Health and Economic Education (PSHE) lesson which was compulsory for all students. (See section 4.4 for details of the tasks each part of the instrument comprised.) Because of conflicting arrangements, many of the student cohort were not present on the days scheduled for the data collection exercises. Therefore, in addition to the PSHE session for which the research instrument was designed, 27 short sessions were conducted in form classes with groups of students.

The main data collection sessions were of one hour duration and were designed to be able to run in a class lesson time of the school day. The materials required were: worksheets containing instructions and tasks to be completed, and an accompanying PowerPoint guide to the session. Reference maps were available in student planners. The PowerPoint presentation gave the context for the speech stimulus responses. It also supported the task questions in a way which is familiar to the participant group, i.e., school students. They were able to look at instructions and information on the board as well as on their response sheet. Additionally, switching to the next slide on the PowerPoint allowed the researcher to keep the session running to time.

Two sessions were scheduled, one for each entire year group of sixth form students at the school. During PSHE lessons, the whole year group were frequently assembled to listen to visiting speakers. The programme for the year included information sessions about

future employment and university options, so it was within the normal range of student expectations that this session was taking place. The session was not targeted at students intending to apply for universities. Students were given a perspective in which they, as school students were regarded as the 'experts' whose opinions were being sought. The task was introduced as an employment selection context. In previous literature, hypothetical employment contexts have been used where participants consider whether speakers would be considered suitable for a job role (e.g., Rakic et al 2011). The procedure of the present study put the students into a 'real' situation in which they actually are the desired audience, and they are giving genuine feedback on a speaker in context.

The researcher introduced herself as a researcher working on a project about person perception. The introduction explained that although a lot of school preparation for universities is about how to get a place, the universities themselves are also competing to attract school students. The participants were told that 'We know that people form impressions very quickly, but what we don't really know is; when universities send people out from universities to come into schools to talk to students, what sort of impression you get?'

The introduction was accompanied by the opening slide of the PowerPoint presentation which presented the context for the task, which was necessary to elicit attitudes indirectly. The first slide included the logo of each of the local universities so that the associations of one particular establishment would not interfere with evaluation.

The second slide explained the rationale for the task, encouraging the participants to believe the speakers were ambassador to local schools, and they were rating their suitability for the role. Only questions 1 and 2 required this distraction from the true object of the study. Afterwards the true nature of the task was explained, and the rest of the tasks proceeded. It was important that this part of the task was completed first, before any identification or degree of difference tasks, so that the spontaneous associations of the speech could be elicited without interference from the explicit decisions involved in the later tasks.

Task 1 was designed to elicit responses to recorded speech samples. The first question required the participants to supply keyword responses associated with each of the 9 speakers in turn. Each recorded speech sample was approximately 30 seconds in length. A ten second interval was included between each speaker to allow time for responses to

be written down. The second question asked participants to evaluate the speaker suitability for the role of school ambassador in accordance with 2 traits. (See section 4.6 for further discussion of the development of this task). As this question asked for deliberate decision-making rather than immediate and to some extent implicit judgement, the speech stimulus was played again during this task. Only after completion of these tasks was the true nature of the task explained and the focus shifted to explicitly linguistic judgements. The last two questions asked for linguistic judgement about the speech rather than evaluation of the speaker. For this reason, the speech sample was played a third time during completion of the last part of the task. Participants were asked to rate difference from their own way of speaking on a 10-point scale, and to place a cross or a dot on a map to indicate the provenance of each speaker. The participants were required to listen to the speech stimulus a total of 3 times. The first of these allowed for immediate unrehearsed spontaneous responses. The subsequent hearings allowed more processing time and further familiarity with the voices for the decision-making tasks. Each of the tasks was conducted whist listening and continued through the 10 second duration which followed each speaker. In the present study the task was designed to be completed by the participants in a large grouping, meaning that all participants heard the speakers in the same order. Consequently, it is possible that order effects could interfere with results of impressions. To avoid this problem, if data can be collected in multiple smaller groups, it is possible to mix the sequence of speakers for different groups of participants. Order effects were considered unlikely to interfere with evaluations, as these were collected after a second hearing, when listeners had already been exposed to all speakers.

PowerPoint slides also supported completion of the affiliation task and were used to move the task along.

The final slide on the PowerPoint was shown while the papers were collected. This reiterated the information, which was on the instruction sheet, assuring the participants of the anonymity of their data. The slide also included the contact details for the researcher. The researcher explained the research in more detail and explained that permission was needed if their information was to be used in the study and could be withdrawn if a participant was no longer happy to take part in the study. The participants were each issued with a research information sheet to take home and keep which included information in more detail and again gave contact details. Written consent forms were distributed, which needed to be signed by parents and returned.

4.9. **Data processing and Analysis**

This section briefly explains how scores were derived from the instruments, and what analyses were conducted to address the study questions. An overview of the finalised research design is then presented in Figure 4-9, outlining the data collected and the links between the various elements. Further detail of the analytical procedures used in each of the three results sections are included at the start of the appropriate chapter. The study used a repeated measures design to elicit evaluations and impressions of nine speakers of different varieties of speech at different levels of locality. The same participants also provided responses to affiliation scales designed to measure orientation towards local places and local voices. To prepare the results for analysis all responses from the pen and paper task were first transferred to an excel spreadsheet, in order to collate quantitative and qualitative data from each participant.

In order to address RQ2, the 27 columns of word association responses were transferred to word documents for thematic analysis. Scores for positivity and negativity were subjectively coded for each of the 3,172 words individually, as were thematic grouping of words into the 'big two' dimension categories. Word documents were also transformed into .txt files using AntFileConverter and were then uploaded to AntConc software for 'keyness' analysis, in order to identify words which occurred more frequently in response to specific speakers. Bottom-up thematic coding of responses to the nine speakers was then undertaken subjectively by the researcher. Full details of the procedures involved and the rationale for their use are included at the beginning of chapter 6, before the results are presented.

The remaining numeric data was transferred to SPSS version 25, to enable statistical analysis to be undertaken. For each of the 153 participants, data was coded for 39 variables, some of which were later transformed for further analysis. In order to address RQ1, differences between mean evaluations of speakers were analysed using ANOVA, to find out whether the participant group responded significantly differently to different varieties of English. Multi-dimensional scaling, combined with cluster analysis, was used to investigate groupings in speaker evaluations by spatially representing dissimilarity. Further explanation of these techniques can be found as preliminary material to the results presented in chapter 5.

In order to address RQ3, results from the affiliation scales were prepared for analysis by converting marks along the visual analogue scale to numerical values. Pearson's correlations were performed to compare voice affiliation scores, relating responses to speakers and to conceptual labels. Correlations were also used to investigate the relationship between place identity affiliation scores.

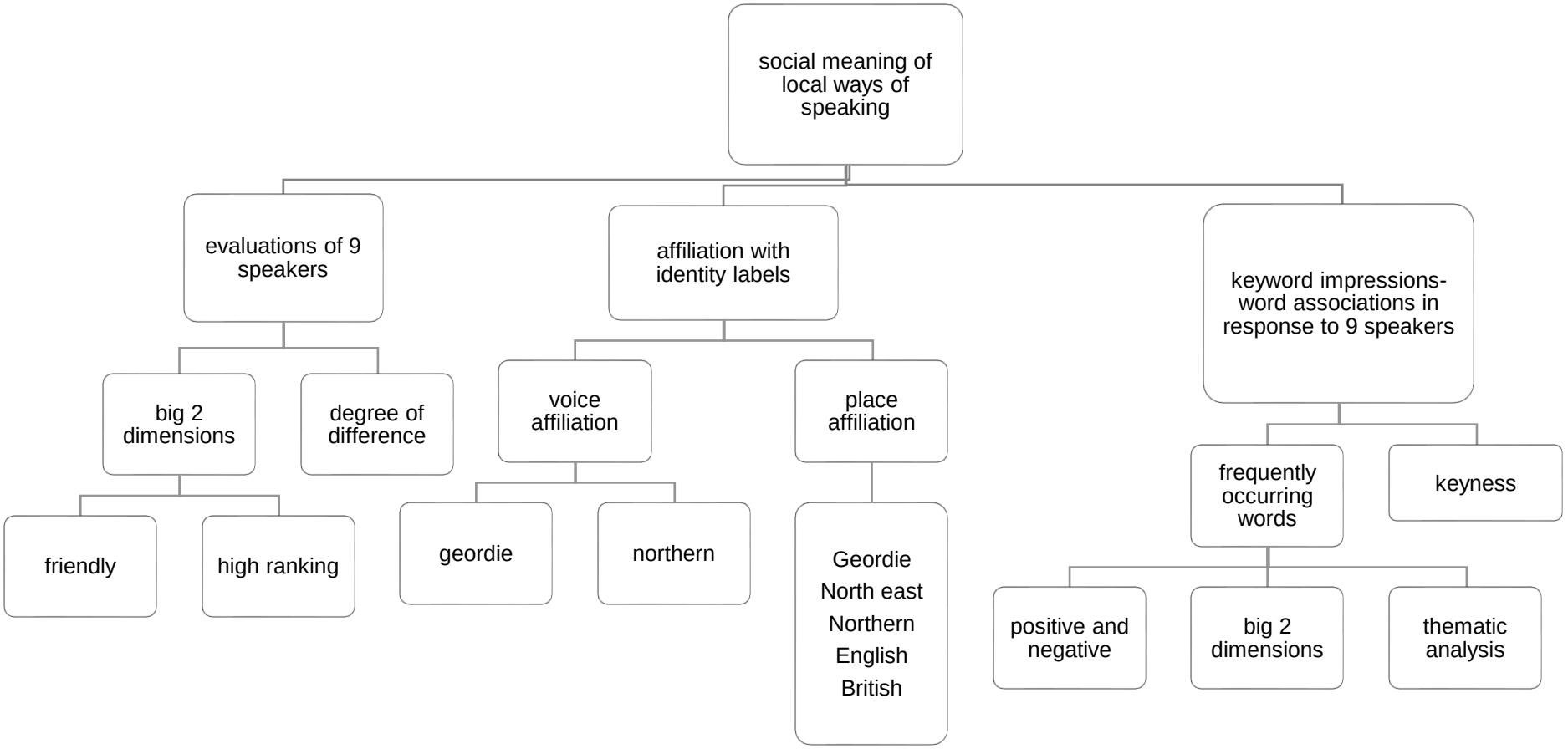

Figure 4-9 Research design overview

Chapter 5: **Results and discussion part 1: speaker evaluation data**

Overview

This chapter deals with RQ1, investigating what can be learned about perceptions of speech community membership amongst young people from Newcastle from evaluations of local, area, regional and national varieties of speech. The data used to address this question derived from three 10-point interval scales, in response to a nine-speaker speech stimulus. As mentioned in section 4.8, some detail of the techniques selected for analysis is given initially, before moving on to results and preliminary discussion. Section 5.1 will discuss between-speaker differences in the responses to the speech stimulus. The section will examine responses to the two evaluative scales used in the speaker selection task, relating to the dimensions of status and social attractiveness. Firstly, descriptive statistics are provided showing differences in the evaluations across speakers. Secondly, inferential statistics are presented, indicating where differences between evaluations are statistically significant. Thirdly, clusters of responses are examined to identify meaningful groupings in the responses. Further to this, in section 5.2, differences between scoring along the two evaluative dimensions are examined with reference to the framework of the stereotype content model. In section 5.3, responses to the degree of difference task will be detailed.

Choice of statistical techniques used in analysis

Repeated measures ANOVA

Repeated measures ANOVAs were chosen in order to investigate differences between the participants' responses to nine varieties of English. This technique was selected to ascertain whether differences in the participants' responses to the nine speakers were statistically significant, or whether differences could be arrived at by random chance. The ANOVAs were employed to examine whether the dependent variable *perception of accents* (friendly/ high ranking etc.) was influenced significantly by the independent variable *speaker*.

However, certain assumptions should be met before the given statistical tests are applied, which were taken into consideration as outlined below.

Assumptions of parametric tests

Parametric tests require that the data meet five assumptions:

- Level of measurement

Parametric techniques assume that the dependent variable is a scale variable. In the present study, the participant responses, or scores were measured on a scale of 1-10, meaning that a parametric test might be suitable for determining the statistical significance of differences between mean scores.

- Random sampling

Many studies use parametric tests to analyse scores obtained by convenience sampling, but caution must be taken in generalising results to wider populations.

- Independence of observations

Where data is collected in a group situation, as in the present study, behaviour of individuals in the group could influence other group members, with implications for the validity of the data. In the present study, the data collection task was undertaken in conditions where each participant completed the scoring independently and with assurances of anonymity, so peer pressures were unlikely to interfere with scoring.

- Normal distribution

As Pallant (2016 p 115) points out, many of the attributes we want to measure are not normally distributed (i.e., parametric) and may be skewed towards the lower or the higher end. It is possible to manipulate data so that the assumption is met, but this is a controversial option. In the case of ANOVA, which is considered fairly robust, it is possible to use the technique anyway, although a sample size of over 30 is recommended. As there is a sample size (N=153) the researcher decided that ANOVA remained an option in this case, especially given that stem and leaf plots suggested a relatively normal distribution.

- Homogeneity of variance

Repeated measures ANOVA assumes sphericity, which means the variability of scores for groups should be similar. This assumption is tested by using Mauchly's Test of Sphericity, which tests the null hypothesis that the variances of the differences are equal. Thus, if Mauchly's Test of Sphericity is statistically significant ($p < .05$), we can reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that the variances of the differences are

not equal (i.e., sphericity has been violated.) When this occurs, a multivariate approach can be used, which does not require an assumption of sphericity. As Mauchly's test of sphericity was statistically significant, the results from the ANOVAs reported in section 5.1.2.1 adopted the multivariate approach and report Wilks' Lambda statistics.

Interpreting ANOVA outcomes

Alongside interpretation of the test statistic *(F), p,* and confidence intervals it is possible to examine effect size to gauge the magnitude of any difference. Partial eta squared is a statistic that measures the percentage of the variance in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variable. Cohen's (1988 p 2) guidelines are used to interpret the strength of partial eta squared. In this guideline a value of 0.01 indicates a small effect, 0.06 a moderate effect, and 0.14 a large effect size.

Multidimensional scaling

Garrett (2010) reports on how multidimensional scaling was useful in interpreting the attitudinal responses of teenagers in Wales towards a series of recorded narratives. Multidimensional scaling (MDS) gives a visual representation of the pattern of distances among a set of objects. "Objects" can be colors, faces, map coordinates, political persuasion, or any kind of real or conceptual stimuli (Kruskal and Wish, 1978). MDS calculates the distances between data points using Euclidean distance and represents these in two (or more) dimensions. 'Cognitive maps' are produced, on which the x axis represents positive or negative responses to the statement or question, whereas the y axis can possibly be subjectively interpreted in terms of additional dimensions influencing evaluations.

In the data presented below, multidimensional scaling was used to measure and represent participants' perception of the nine speakers (and by extension, their variety of speech). Perceptual maps were produced which represent patterns of proximities in the evaluation scores elicited by the speakers. Proxcal was selected in SPSS to create a measurement of proximities rather than distances. This results in a negative or descending relationship between input values and corresponding map distances. The more similar the evaluation of any two speakers, the smaller will be the distance between them on the output map.

There are two things to look for in interpreting an MDS picture: clusters and dimensions. Clusters are groups of items that are closer to each other than to other items. Where separated clusters occur in perceptual data, it may suggest that each cluster is a domain or

subdomain which should be analysed individually. Dimensions are item attributes that seem to order the items in the map along a continuum. The dimensions of high ranking, friendly and degree of difference were already inherent in the study design, but MDS as well as confirming these dimensions could reveal where alternative dimensions shape responses. In the present study, the cognitive output maps represent difference between perceptions of speakers as distances in two-dimensional space.

Cluster analysis

Hierarchical cluster analysis using the average linking method was performed in SPSS on the data both for friendly and for high-ranking dimensions, clustering by the speaker variable. Agglomerative methods are the most widely used in cluster analysis, in which subjects start in their own separate cluster. The two clusters with the greatest similarity are then combined and the process is repeated until all subjects are in one cluster. The researcher must then choose which of the cluster solutions seems to be the most useful number of clusters for explaining the data.

5.1. Speaker Evaluations: Differences between speakers

This section looks at the nature of the relationships between the ratings for the different speakers. It asks the questions: a) are there differences in listener ratings between the speaker samples? b) which speakers are rated as statistically significantly different from each other? c) are there any clusters of speakers who are rated as significantly different from each other?

Participants were asked to listen to each speaker in turn and rate each speaker using a 10-point interval scale to indicate agreement or disagreement with two statements. (See section 4.6.4.2 for details of the rationale informing the choice of these questions). The statements were:

‘This person gives an impression of a friendly university.’ and

‘This person gives an impression of a high-ranking university.’

These statements were presented in the context of a speaker selection task, in which the speakers were being considered for roles as ambassadors to schools, answering pupils’ questions about university life. The statements were designed both to deflect conscious attention from language variety as the focus of the research, and to capture the two

evaluative dimensions (*status/social attractiveness*) previously found to be important in language attitude research, also reflected in the dimensions of *competence* and *warmth* in the stereotype content model (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2008), and related to the terms *pleasant* and *correct* identified by previous research in perceptual dialectology (e.g. Preston 1999) as important concepts in folklinguistic evaluation of language varieties. The speech stimulus was designed (see section 4.6.3.2 for detail) to include speakers of urban varieties of English spoken at four 'nested' levels of locality, i.e., local (Geordie), area (north-east), regional (northern) and national ('standard').

Terms to be used in reporting the results

As the word 'speaker' was used to refer to the varieties of English presented during data collection, in reporting these results I refer to this categorical variable as '*speaker*' rather than 'variety'. Also in keeping with the terms used in the data collection exercise, the term '*high-ranking'* will be used in the following discussions to describe the dimension that includes status or competence traits, while the term '*friendly*' will be used to describe the dimension that includes solidarity, warmth or personal attractiveness traits.

Although the speakers were identified to listeners by numbers during the data collection process, to aid transparency for readers, Figure 5-1 details the *geographical provenance* of each speaker. The abbreviations in column three are used in the text below to refer to the selected speakers.

Speaker	Home town	Abbreviation
1	Newcastle, west	NCL W
2	Leeds	LDS
3	Liverpool	LIV
4	London	LON
5	Manchester	MAN
6	Middlesbrough	MID
7	Newcastle, east	NCL E
8	Sheffield	SHE
9	Sunderland	SUN

Figure 5-1 Provenance of nine speakers of English (and abbreviations) provided as speech stimuli for the present study.

5.1.1. Results of evaluations along the friendly dimension

5.1.1.1. *Results of ANOVA and post hoc results along the 'friendly' dimension*

As detailed at the start of this chapter, a one-way repeated measures ANOVA, with Bonferroni post hoc corrections to correct for multiple comparisons, was conducted to compare scores across the nine speakers for rating agreement with the statement 'this speaker gives the impression of a friendly university'. Preliminary characterisation of the data showed that the assumption of sphericity could not be met. A multivariate approach was therefore used.

The rank order of mean ratings per speaker is presented in Table 5.1 Descriptive statistics for scores on the 'friendly' dimension for each speaker: mean evaluations and standard deviations (N=148) Maximum score=10. Missing values were excluded, so ratings are based on responses of 148 listeners.

Table 5.1 Descriptive statistics for scores on the 'friendly' dimension for each speaker: mean evaluations and standard deviations (N=148) Maximum score=10

Speaker	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
NCLE	7.524	1.73	148
LIV	6.541	1.69	148
SHE	6.382	1.62	148
LDS	6.257	1.59	148
NCLW	6.027	1.70	148
SUN	5.833	1.74	148
LON	5.297	2.06	148
MAN	5.294	1.92	148
MID	5.007	1.83	148

The initial ANOVA showed a significant effect for language variety, Wilks Lambda= .446, F (8, 140) = 21.77, *p*.001, multivariate partial eta squared = .554, which suggests a very large effect size (Cohen, 1988 p 284-7).

To determine which pairs of means might differ significantly from each other, post hoc Bonferroni adjusted pairwise comparisons were conducted. Bonferroni adjustment was

considered more appropriate than a series of individual t-tests as it compensates for the fact that multiple comparisons are being made. As the test produces a conservative result , the results reported are unlikely to suffer from type 1 error i.e. rejection of a true null hypothesis, but conversely risk of type 2 error may be increased, i.e. failure to recognise a significant result. Therefore, as nine paired comparisons were made, interpretation of these results should bear in mind the risk that significant differences may be somewhat under-reported.

The hierarchical ranking of the nine speakers for the 'friendly' dimension is summarised below, in descending order of evaluation. Bold type with an asterisk indicates where there is a significant difference in scores ($p < 0.05$) between evaluations of speakers within the hierarchy.

Newcastle (east) *

Liverpool

Sheffield

Leeds

Newcastle (west)

Sunderland

London

Manchester

Middlesbrough

The results indicated that for this 'friendly' dimension, the Newcastle listener group rated one of the local Newcastle speakers, (NCLE) statistically significantly more 'friendly' than all of the other eight speakers. There were no other statistically significant differences between any other adjacent speakers in the rank ordered table.

Nevertheless, looking at all of the pairwise comparisons, where speakers are not adjacent in the hierarchy, there are many significant differences between pairs, as can be seen in the results presented in Table 5.2. In particular the Middlesbrough speaker was rated significantly less 'friendly' than 6 out of 8 of all the other speakers. The p-value results are reported according to the hierarchy, from the highest ranking (by mean ratings) speaker

(NCLE) at the top and to the left of the table, to the lowest ranking speaker (MID) at the bottom and to the right of the table. Statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) are indicated by an asterisk and bold type.

Table 5.2 Significant differences in post hoc pairwise comparisons between speaker ratings for the 'Friendly' dimension: p values for each pair (Bonferroni adjusted)

Speaker	NCLE	LIV	SHE	LDS	NCLW	SUN	LON	MAN	MID
LIV	**.000***								
SHE	**.000***	1.000							
LDS	**.000***	1.000	1.000						
NCLW	**.000***	.122	1.000	1.000					
SUN	**.000***	**.006***	.056	1.000	1.000				
LON	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	**.043***	.154			
MAN	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	**.003***	.208	1.000		
MID	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	1.000	1.000	

Although the hierarchy revealed only one significantly more 'friendly' speaker (NCLE), the full list of significant differences in the pairwise comparisons suggests that the remaining eight speakers do not form a single outgroup. It appears that there may be other patterns in the ratings, particularly where the lower ranking speakers, LON, MAN and MID, were rated as significantly less friendly than the majority of other speakers. In order to clarify where groupings exist in the ratings of the speakers, and the relationship between them, multi-dimensional scaling and cluster analysis were performed.

5.1.1.2. ***Results of multi-dimensional scaling and cluster analysis of all responses to speakers along the 'friendly' dimension***

Multi-dimensional scaling was performed on all responses to the statement 'This speaker gives the impression of a friendly university', as shown in Figure 5-2.

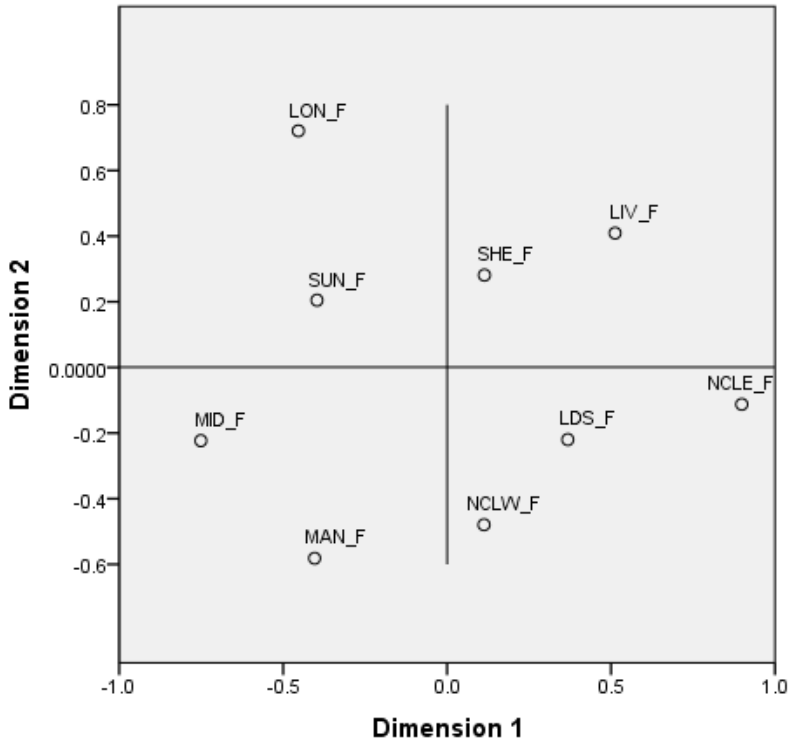

Figure 5-2 MDS perceptual map of impressions of speakers in response to the statement: 'This speaker gives the impression of a friendly university'

In response to the statement 'This speaker gives the impression of a friendly university', loosely grouped distances are generated, which lack cohesion as a cluster. In relation to the horizontal axis, results are interpretable as representing increasing friendliness towards the right of the map. NCLE is the speaker most associated with an impression of a friendly university, and MID the least friendly, as found in the ANOVA rankings. Additionally, however, the groups are spread along the vertical axis, where distances do not reflect this hierarchy. On the vertical axis, LON is distanced from the other low-rated speakers, MAN and MID. Thus, the two-dimensional perceptual map resulting from MDS (Figure 5-2) suggests that in addition to the 'friendly' dimension a further dimension may be shaping participants' responses to the statement. Levels of locality do not seem to be of influence, as speakers from the locality, the north-east area and the wider northern region do not appear to be distanced in identifiable groupings.

Hierarchical cluster analysis was conducted to examine whether meaningful groupings, or 'clusters' could be interpreted from the distances mapped in the MDS cognitive map. The resulting clusters of speakers are shown on icicle plots. Each vertical line on the plot along the x-axis represents a case, or object- in this instance a speaker. These are labelled at the top of the plot. Objects in the same cluster appear in the darker colour, while clusters are separated by a lighter coloured space. Horizontal lines from the y-axis refer to each level of the clustering. Each iteration is presented in ascending order along the y-axis. Each iteration results in a link, so the number of clusters (numbered along the y-axis) reduces by one each time, until the final single-cluster solution is reached at the top of the y-axis. Figure 5-3 shows the results of cluster analysis of all responses in response to the statement 'This person gives an impression of a friendly university'.

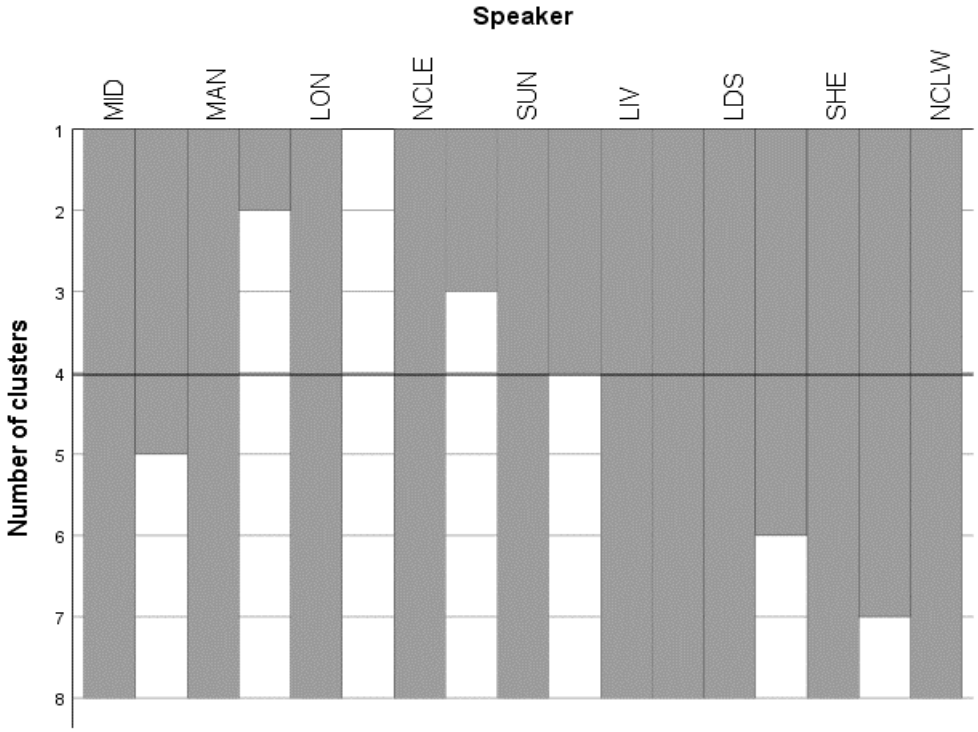

Figure 5-3 Icicle plot of the cluster solutions obtained by hierarchical cluster analysis, where cases are 'friendly' scores for each speaker, with a reference line on the y-axis indicating a four-cluster solution.

It can be seen that in the two-cluster solution, the last two groupings to be combined were a cluster comprising MAN, MID and LON, separated from a cluster comprising LIV, LDS, SHE, NCLW, SUN and NCLE. This solution combines the three speakers who were

statistically significantly less friendly than the majority of other speakers according to the pairwise tests reported above. Looking at the two-cluster solution together with the MDS map, this does not appear to be the best solution to explain groupings, as on the vertical axis of the map, MID and MAN are distanced from LON. A three cluster solution separates LON from the 'less friendly northern speakers' (MAN and MID) combining all other speakers in one cluster together of 'general northern speakers'. Hence, a three-cluster solution would seem to suggest that there is little discrimination between the 'general northern speakers', whereas the pairwise results (as reported in section 5.1.1.1) found significant difference between NCLE and all other speakers. For that reason, the three-cluster solution was not selected as the best fitting description of the data. In the four-cluster solution, as seen in Figure 5-4, the 'less friendly northern speakers', MAN and MID form a cluster together, LON is a single-object cluster, as is NCLE, and the rest of the 'general northern speakers' are grouped together.

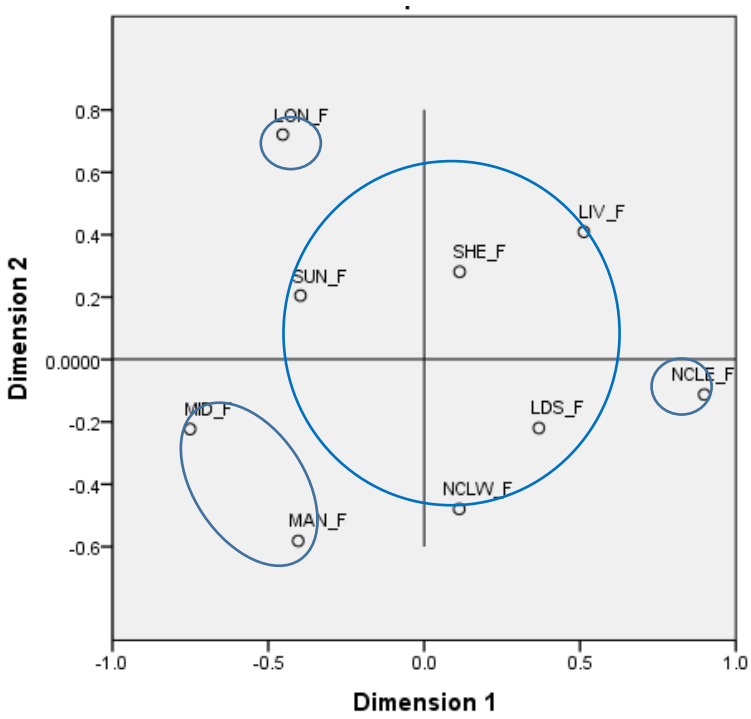

Figure 5-4 Cluster analysis combined with MDS perceptual map of impressions of speakers in response to the statement: 'This speaker gives the impression of a friendly university'

Looking at the results of the cluster analysis combined with the MDS map for the friendly dimension, the four-cluster solution is one in which MID and MAN form a cluster of 'less

friendly northern speakers 'and are distanced apart from the majority of the 'general northern speakers' who are grouped together. It is noticeable that the single-object clusters (NCLE and LON) along with the 'less friendly northern speakers' cluster, form the three corners of a triangular configuration, whereas the 'general northern speakers' cluster is more centrally placed. These groupings show that the lower-rated speakers along this dimension, LON, MAN and MID, are perceived differently from each other. There is little distinction between the 'general northern speakers' but NCLE is perceived as distinctively different from them.

5.1.1.3. ***Discussion of the findings from the evaluations of speakers along the 'friendly' dimension.***

The results detailed above demonstrate that in terms of social attractiveness, one of the speakers of a Newcastle variety (NCLE) is rated significantly more favourably than the other eight speakers. This outcome, thus far, is perhaps to be expected, given the findings from Giles (1971), that ingroup loyalty can be demonstrated towards non-standard varieties of speech where these are local to the listener group. The positive evaluations may be a reflection of ingroup identification with the speaker, suggesting that the listeners' response is an expression of solidarity with 'Geordie' speech. As the listener group are more likely to be familiar with the local variety, this may account for their preference for this speaker, as favourable responses are also more likely where a stimulus is familiar, unless it is related to negative associations (Zajonc 2001). However, the speech stimulus included two 'Geordie' speakers, and intriguingly, the other speaker of the variety (NCLW) was not rated highly for the 'friendly' dimension. As the speech stimulus was controlled for other potentially confounding variables, it is somewhat puzzling that only one of the two 'Geordie' speakers was ingrouped and not the other. One interpretation might be that only one of the speakers was perceived as being a 'pure' Geordie speaker, however other evidence does not support this view. Neither speaker was perceived as more 'Geordie' than the other speaker on the degree of difference scale, which is discussed in section 5.3.

In the ANOVA hierarchy, no other significant differences were found, which seemed initially to suggest that the listeners afforded ingroup status only to one local speaker. The other 'nested' levels of locality, area, regional and national varieties, were not distinguished from each other and appeared to form a single outgroup. However, several other significant

differences existed between pairs who were not adjacent on the hierarchy, particularly among the speakers deemed less friendly. Three speakers in particular, LON, MAN and MID, were rated significantly less friendly than the majority of speakers. Of these, the speaker of Standard Southern British English (LON) might be expected to be less favoured for social attractiveness, as it has been found in many studies that speakers of standard languages or varieties are less favoured along this dimension. In the case of LON, this seems to be a credible interpretation of the less favourable ratings on the 'friendly' dimension. However, this reasoning dos does not account for the lower ratings for the speakers from Manchester and from Middlesbrough. Neither can it be assumed that the same reasons account for the relative disfavour in ratings of both of these speakers along the 'friendly' dimension. The cluster analysis and multidimensional scaling were undertaken to help to determine whether there was some perceptual differentiation between significantly lower scoring speakers on the 'friendly' dimension.

The combined MDS and cluster analyses of the responses along the friendly dimension can be interpreted in terms of ingrouping and outgouping. The 'general northern speakers' are centrally placed, suggesting that voices from a wider northern region do not appear to be particularly favoured or disfavoured. These speakers do not elicit strong ingroup or outgroup membership perceptions. This is interesting, since in chapter 7, we will see that these results contradict findings from the affiliation scales.

The other three clusters are placed at roughly equidistant points in the two-dimensional configuration, suggesting that they are regarded differently from each other. NCLE appears to be favoured as an ingroup speaker, placed at the extreme of the x axis, which indicates that he is most highly regarded in terms of the 'friendly' dimension. As this cluster is a single-object cluster, NCLE is differentiated from all other speakers. This would suggest that in the wider frames of reference presented in the speech stimulus, ingrouping operates at a highly localised level. The data examined thus far cannot explain why listeners responded differently to NCLW, who did not share this ingroup position. Distinctions between these areas of the city are not detailed in the usage literature (e.g., Allen et al 2007, Buchstaller 2011), where the Tyneside variety of speech is generally taken to include a wider catchment area including voices from areas south of the Tyne. Distinctions have been made between working class and middle-class speech, based on the demographic profile of areas of the city, however in the speech stimulus used in the present study, the speakers

were selected from parts of the city which had been previously identified in preliminary piloting as ‘areas where you are most likely to hear Geordie speech’. Therefore, production differences due to social class are unlikely to account for this distinction. One of the justifications for perceptual work in sociolinguistics is that perceived difference in usage may represent actual difference. If the listeners perceived difference between the speaker from east and west Newcastle areas, it is possible that they are picking up on fine-grained highly localised production difference at the level of areas of the city. The demographic profile of respondents supports this tentative suggestion, as the majority of them were from areas in the east of the city.

The other two clusters of speakers suggest outgrouping of speakers who were significantly less favoured, placed at the opposite end of the x axis. These clusters, however, do not share perceptual space in the two-dimensional cognitive map. Thus, the MDS results, combined with cluster analysis, support the view that the reasons for outgrouping the SSBE speaker differ from the reasons for outgrouping the ‘less friendly northern speakers’.

Familiarity can be sufficient cause for responding to an attitudinal object with favour rather than disfavour, providing that negative connotations are not associated with the object (Zajonc 2001). It is possible that the voices judged less friendly were simply less familiar to participants. Montgomery (2007) identified two factors influencing familiarity with speech varieties, i.e., ccccccccccccccccproximity and cultural prominence. The two disfavoured speakers are not the most distant geographically from the listener group, so *bare proximity* does not seem to be the probable explanation for the findings in this case. However, the *relative proximity* of the city of Middlesbrough may have been a factor influencing judgements of MID, the speaker of this variety. Frames of reference help to explain the relationship of ingroup claiming and local proximity. Abrams and Hogg (1987) found that frames of reference influenced listener ratings in a Scottish context, where local Dundee voices were favoured over Glasgow speakers. However, when Glasgow speakers were presented in contrast with an English speaker, they were relatively favoured. In the present context, the frame of reference includes local, area, regional and national voices In their everyday interactions, the participant group would be most familiar with speech from Newcastle, which Pearce (2009) found to be perceived as being distinctively different from other city dialects within the north-east , i.e., Sunderland and Middlesbrough. Thus, a Middlesbrough voice, although relatively local, may have sounded sufficiently unfamiliar

(when contrasted with a Newcastle voice) to be outgrouped by the listeners. In this frame of reference, the Middlesbrough voice seemingly is *not sufficiently local* to be favoured. The rejection of this speaker may be a form of boundary marking. A negative response is perhaps exaggerated in response to this speaker, in order to emphasise that he falls outside a boundary of perceived local speech community membership.

In the wider north, beyond the north-east, proximity can be expected to be less influential on results, as geographical knowledge is not as likely to be sufficiently fine grained to differentiate between nearer and further cities. The cities of Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield and Liverpool were all selected as being culturally prominent cities, with distinctive ways of speaking. Nevertheless, familiarity with the voices of northern cities may be unequal. Liverpool, like Newcastle, is home to one of the most widely recognised varieties in England (Montgomery 2012)). Although the increasing cultural prominence of the 'Manc' voice was noted by Montgomery (2007), it is possible that MAN spoke with a voice that was not particularly familiar voice to participants, and so was less favoured.

It is also possible, on the other hand, that the Manchester voice *was* familiar, but associated with negative connotations. If this is the case, these connotations do not appear to be attributed to other voices. Negative stereotypes associated with the Manchester voice were mentioned by the speaker himself, who dissociated himself from a specific culturally prominent celebrity prototype for Manchester speech, Liam Gallagher. It is possible that although the speaker was aware of fine-grained differences within Manchester voices, the listeners may not have distinguished such differences. The variety of speech may have triggered reference to a characterological figure who is deemed less 'friendly'.

This section has discussed how speakers are regarded in terms of the 'friendly' dimension, which is interpreted as an indication of ingroup preference. Evaluations in general demonstrate clear preference for one of the local speakers, antipathy towards two of the northern speakers, relative disfavour in response to the standard southern British English speaker, and somewhat indifferent attitudes towards the rest of the speakers. The results also raised interesting questions about the degree of localism involved in ingrouping of the speakers, the impact of familiarity on preferences for speech varieties, and the nature of prototypes influencing preferences. In section 5.1.2, the second dimension is examined, which will help to determine whether linguistic insecurity characterises attitudes towards local speech among the participant group.

5.1.2. Results of evaluations along the 'high-ranking' dimension

5.1.2.1. *Results of ANOVA and post hoc results along the 'high-ranking' dimension*

A one-way repeated measures ANOVA, with Bonferroni post hoc corrections to correct for multiple comparisons, was conducted to compare scores across the nine speakers for rating agreement with the statement 'this speaker gives the impression of a high-ranking university'. Mauchley's test of sphericity again showed sphericity could not be assumed, therefore multivariate results are reported. The means and standard deviations are presented in Table 5.3 Missing values were excluded, reducing the number of listener participants to 147.

Table 5.3 Descriptive statistics for scores on the 'high ranking' dimension for each speaker: mean evaluations and standard deviations (N=147) Maximum score= 10.

Speaker	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
LON	7.265	2.04	147
NCLE	6.272	1.86	147
SUN	5.983	1.71	147
LIV	5.854	1.59	147
SHE	5.796	1.59	147
LDS	5.337	1.74	147
NCLW	5.102	1.74	147
MID	4.816	1.87	147
MAN	4.735	1.89	147

Results of the ANOVA showed that here was a significant effect for language variety in evaluations along the 'high-ranking' dimension, Wilks Lambda =.411, F (8, 139) = 24.95, *p*.001, multivariate partial eta squared = .589, which again suggests a very large effect size (Cohen, 1988 p 284-7).

Table 5.4 supplies the results for the Bonferroni post hoc pairwise comparisons between speakers, for the 'high -ranking' dimension. The hierarchy is first summarised below, in

descending order of evaluation. Bold type again indicates where there is a significant difference in scores ($p < 0.05$) between evaluations of speakers within the hierarchy.

London *

Newcastle (east)

Sunderland

Liverpool

Sheffield

Leeds

Newcastle (west)

Middlesbrough

Manchester

The London sample was rated statistically significantly higher (more high ranking) than all other speakers. No other adjacent (on the ranking table) samples were rated as significantly different from each other. As previously, looking at all of the pairwise comparisons, where speakers are not adjacent in the hierarchy, there are many significant differences between pairs (Table 5.4). Most notably, the Middlesbrough and Manchester speakers were rated as significantly lower ranking than 6 of the eight other speakers.

Table 5.4 Significant differences in post hoc pairwise comparisons between the mean evaluation scores of each speaker along the 'high-ranking' dimension: p values for each pair, (Bonferroni adjusted

Speaker	LON	NCLE	SUN	LIV	SHE	LDS	NCLW	MID	MAN
NCLE	**.001***								
SUN	**.000***	1.000							
LIV	**.000***	.510	1.000						
SHE	**.000***	.101	1.000	1.000					
LDS	**.000***	**.000***	**.029***	.085	.183				
NCLW	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	**.001***	**.001***	1.000			
MID	**.000***	**,000***	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	**.033***	1.000		
MAN	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	**.021***	.934	1.00	

In order to reveal underlying structures in the data set, multi-dimensional scaling was performed.

5.1.2.2. ***Results of multi-dimensional scaling and cluster analysis of all responses to speakers along the 'high-ranking' dimension.***

Multi-dimensional scaling was performed on all responses to the statement 'This speaker gives the impression of a high-ranking university'. This statement was designed to be inclusive, with the intention of capturing the range of traits that a participant might imagine to be entailed within the concept of a 'high-ranking university'.

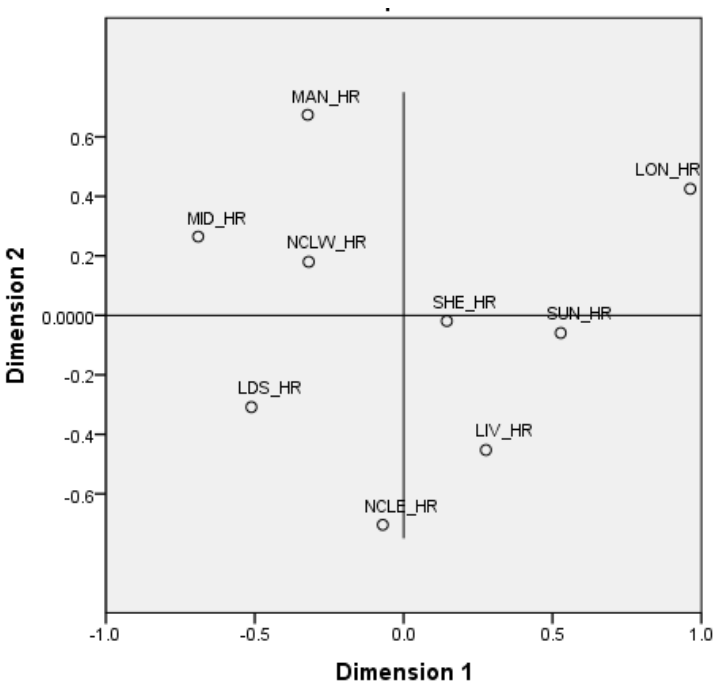

Figure 5-5 MDS perceptual map of impressions of speakers in response to the statement: 'This speaker gives the impression of a high ranking university'

The concept in question appears to influence distribution along the horizontal axis. However, as the results are dispersed in two dimensions on the perceptual map, MDS results suggest that an additional dimension may be influential in participants' responses to the statement. In relation to the horizontal axis, results do not exactly reproduce the ANOVA rankings discussed above, but in general, higher scoring speakers on the 'high-ranking' scale are dispersed towards the right side on the axis, whereas lower scoring

speakers are dispersed to the left side on this axis. LON is the speaker most associated with an impression of high ranking university and is placed at the extreme right side of the axis. The lowest scoring speaker, according to the ANOVA result, was MAN, but on the two-dimensional cognitive map, the speaker placed furthest to the left of the x-axis, where the lowest ranking speaker might be expected to be found, is MID. Despite being ranked in second place on the hierarchy reported above in the ANOVA results, NCLE surprisingly, is positioned at a mid-way point along the x-axis.

The speakers are also dispersed along the vertical axis. Whilst LON and MID are at the extremities of the x axis, they both share a position on the y axis. MAN is also found in this space. NCLE is positioned opposite to these speakers on the vertical axis. The speakers mainly appear to be loosely grouped in an open circle rather than a tight cluster, suggesting that there is little differentiation between speakers.

Hierarchical cluster analysis was conducted to examine whether meaningful groupings, or 'clusters' could be interpreted from the distances mapped in the MDS cognitive map. The resulting clusters of speakers are shown on icicle plots. Figure 5-6 shows the results of cluster analysis of all responses in response to the statement 'This person gives an impression of a high-ranking university'

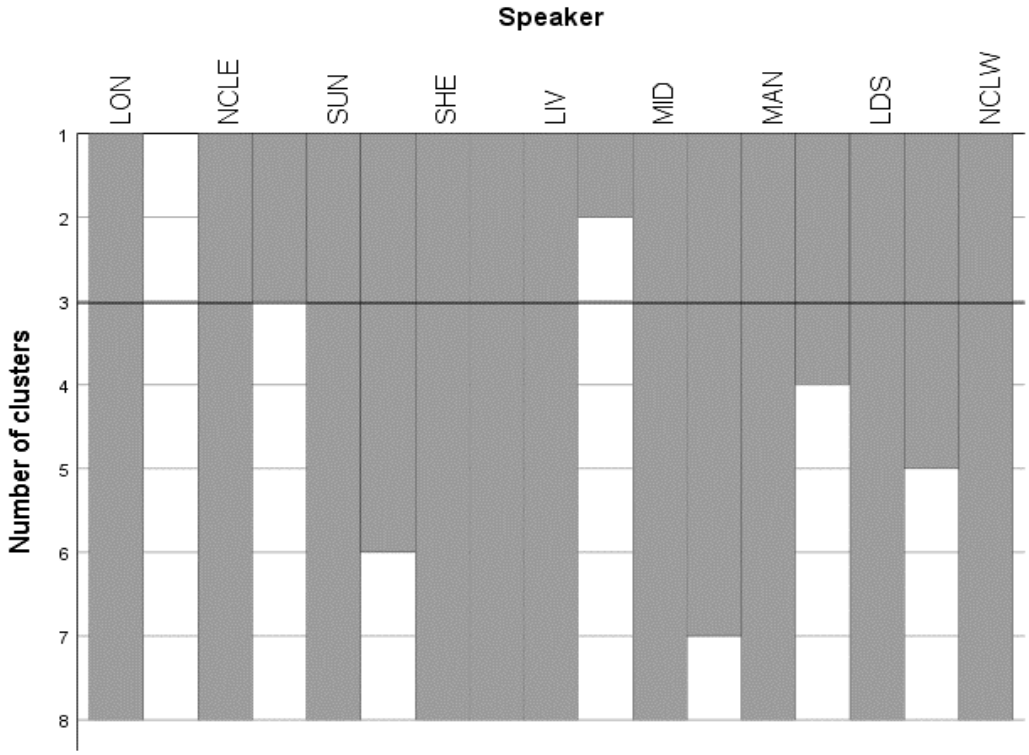

Figure 5-6 Icicle plot of the cluster solutions obtained by hierarchical cluster analysis, where cases are 'high-ranking' scores for each speaker, with reference lines on the y-axis indicating a three-cluster solution

In the two-cluster solution, at the top of the graph, LON is separated from all other speakers. This result is in keeping with the significant differences found in the hierarchy produced by the ANOVA results reported above, where significant difference was found between scores for LON and scores for every other speaker. The two- cluster solution suggests that in the 'high-ranking' dimension, the speaker of Standard Southern British English (LON) is perceived differently from all other speakers, but there is little distinction made between other speakers on this dimension. As seen in Table 5.4, however, the pairwise comparisons suggested that important differences were perceived between other pairs of speakers, so a three-cluster solution seems to offer a better explanation of the underlying structure of the data. The three-cluster solution, in keeping with the pairwise comparisons reported above, differentiates lower scoring speakers from higher scoring speakers. The three cluster solution isolates LON in a single-object cluster, but divides the northern speakers into two groups, one comprising NCLE, SUN SHE and LIV, forming a higher-rated group, and the other comprising the lower-rated speakers, MID, MAN, LDS and NCLW. These clusters reflect the findings of the pairwise comparisons, where no significant differences were

found between NCLE, SUN, LIV and SHE, but significant differences were found between NCLE and MID, MAN, LDS and NCLW.. The resulting clusters have been drawn onto the MDS chart in Figure 5-7, below.

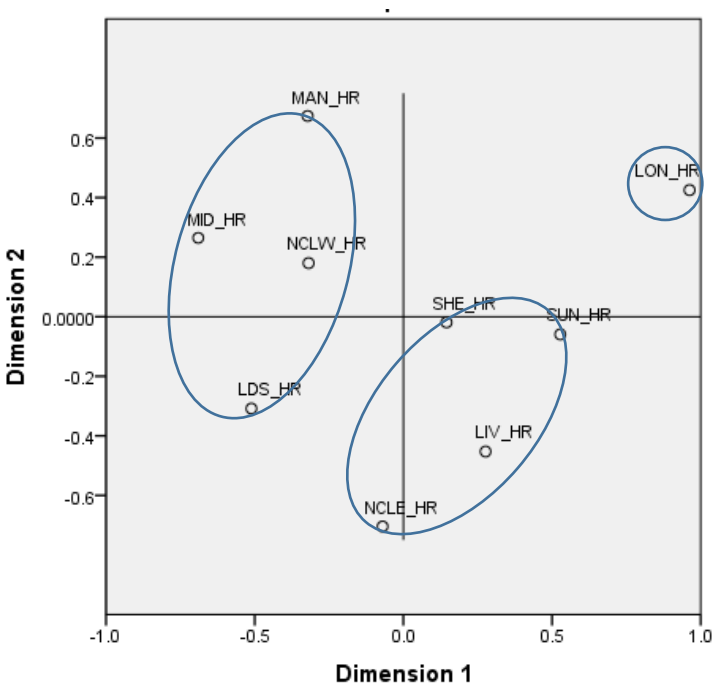

Figure 5-7 Three-cluster solution obtained by hierarchical cluster analysis of responses on the high-ranking dimension, combined with the perceptual map output from MDS.

The three-cluster solution groups speakers with those closest along the x-axis, and thus seems to suggest that the spacing on the y axis is not influential when grouping the results for the *high-ranking* dimension. It is notable in this solution, that NCLE is placed in a group of 'more favoured' northern speakers, yet is spaced to the left of centre along the x- axis. NCLE is also at the furthest distance along the y-axis. Taking into account the positioning of NCLE on the cognitive map, together with the clustering results, a four cluster solution, which places NCLE in a single-object cluster, appears to better reveal the underlying structure in regard responses along the 'high-ranking' dimension.

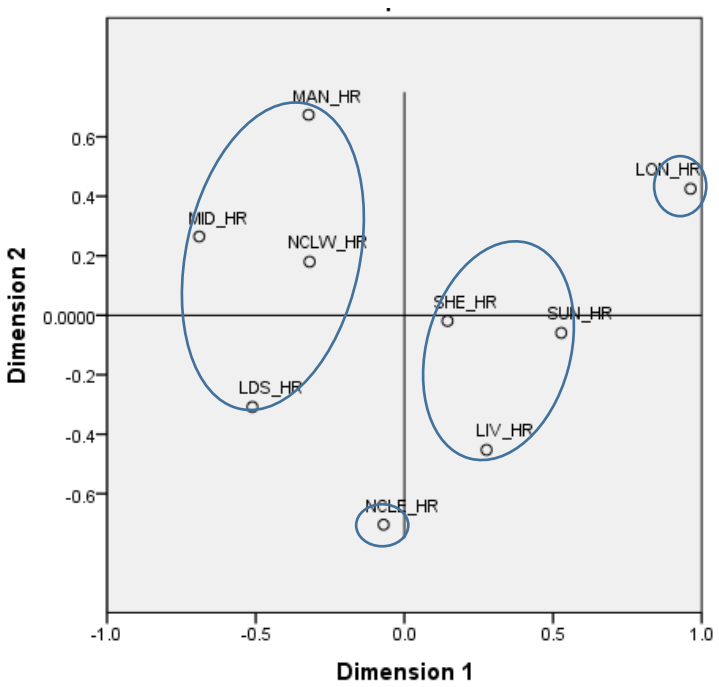

Figure 5-8 Four-cluster solution obtained by hierarchical cluster analysis of responses on the high-ranking dimension, combined with the perceptual map output from MDS.

The four-cluster solution places the two highest-scoring speakers on the 'high-ranking' scale in single-object clusters, suggesting that although highly regarded, they are perceived differently from each other. The rest of the speakers are clustered into groups perceived as 'more high-ranking' or 'less high-ranking' speakers, as defined by agreement with the statement, 'This speaker gives the impression of a high-ranking university'. It appears that a different dimension may have influenced distances on the cognitive map, principally in responses to NCLE.

5.1.2.3. ***Discussion of the findings from the evaluations of speakers along the 'high-ranking' dimension.***

Evaluations of speakers in response to the statement 'This speaker gives the impression of a 'high-ranking university' might reveal insights about perception of speech community membership, as responses to speakers along the status dimension can indicate linguistic security or insecurity.

The ANOVA, post hoc, MDS and cluster analysis results detailed above are all in agreement in demonstrating that in terms of status, the speaker of Standard Southern British English (LON) is rated significantly more positively than the other eight speakers of

northern varieties of English. This finding is in keeping with many previous studies, which consistently over a period of sixty years have found that where a 'standard language ideology' exists, folklinguistic perceptions of language variation regard speakers of 'standard' language varieties as holding higher prestige. Hence, as the speaker of Standard Southern British English is significantly favoured in terms of the status dimension, findings thus suggest that a standard language ideology persists among the young people who participated in the study.

However, that is not to say that linguistic insecurity is evident in evaluations of local ways of speaking. Preston (2013) cautions against interpreting high regard for a standard speaker as linguistic insecurity. Preston's study in Michigan identified a 'super standard' variety, which is considered correct but is not a target for speakers. Preston asked participants to identify which of two variants were correct. Linguistic insecurity was evident where participants identified variants used in in their own variety as being different from 'correct' variants. Preston suggests that there is a preferred way of speaking that is 'correct but not too correct' (Preston 2013 p 323), and that is considered 'normal'. It seems quite possible that the speaker of Standard Southern British English is identified as a speaker of such a 'super standard' in the present study.

Although the only significant difference in scores between speakers in the rank order hierarchy distinguished LON from all other speakers, these others did not constitute a single outgroup. Post-hoc tests and MDS scaling both revealed that some of the northern speakers were perceived to be significantly more likely to give 'an impression of a high-ranking university' than were others. The cluster of higher-rated speakers are perhaps perceived by listeners to demonstrate the preferred 'normal' way of speaking such as Preston identified among his Michigan participants. It is not clear from the results discussed so far, why certain northern speakers are considered more likely to give an 'impression of a high-ranking university' than others, and in particular why this discrepancy is found between two moderately accented speakers of the local variety from Newcastle.

Evaluations along the 'high-ranking' dimension show that a Newcastle voice is not sufficient for downgrading of a speaker with regard to status. Indeed, high scores were awarded to one of the speakers from Newcastle, NCLE, who was the second highest scorer in the hierarchy, suggesting that linguistic insecurity does not characterise responses to local speech.

The cluster of lower-rated speakers included the other local speaker, NCLW. There is evidence in previous literature of differences between evaluations of two speakers of a single variety, where the status of one speaker, who uses a more heavily accented vernacular form of the variety is regarded differently from the status of a more moderately accented speaker (e.g., McKenzie 2010). However, this does not seem to account for the difference found in the present study between evaluations of the two Newcastle speakers. Both speech samples were controlled for age, educational level and gender. Both of the speakers were considered to be moderately accented speakers of 'Geordie' English by a test panel of local adult listeners prior to running the data collection exercises. Both speech samples were also similar in duration. Both answered questions and answers about university accommodation, thereby limiting the intrinsic interest of the content of the speech. Nevertheless, NCLE was significantly more highly rated than NCLW along the status dimension. Responses to NCLW appear to more in keeping with the historical association of Newcastle speech with lower prestige, as detailed in chapter 1.

Another possible consideration in accounting for the difference in ratings for the two Geordie speakers is that order effects may have influenced evaluations. This seems unlikely, given that the evaluation scales were completed after a second hearing of the whole speech stimulus. Listeners had already heard all nine speakers when completing the keyword association task. Consequently, when evaluating the speakers on the 'big two' dimension scales, all of the speakers would be available for comparison, thereby diminishing order effects.

Where distinctions were made between speakers of northern varieties, groupings indicate that levels of locality are not influential in perception of status. North-east area voices were placed in both the more favoured and less favoured clusters, as were speakers from the wider northern region. Even Newcastle speakers were placed in both of the clusters. The ratings on the status dimension reveal that prestige is afforded to the speaker of Standard Southern British English, but northern regional voices, north-east area voices and local Geordie voices are not sufficient to determine status attributions. This finding is in contrast with previous research which has generally found that in terms of status, speakers of northern urban varieties are stigmatised.

Section 5.1 has looked at between-speaker differences in responses along the 'big two' dimensions of person perception, and how these may throw some light on ingrouping and

on linguistic insecurity among young people from Newcastle. Section 5.2 considers how the inter-relationship between these two dimensions can reveal four stereotypes attributed to speakers of the selected urban varieties of English.

5.2. Comparison of evaluations along the two dimensions

As the results of the repeated measures ANOVA and post-hoc tests have demonstrated, on both the 'high ranking' and 'friendly' dimensions, there are some significant between-speaker differences in the means of responses. This section investigates whether high ratings are ascribed to speakers along one dimension, both or neither, and interprets these results using the framework of the stereotype content model.

Firstly, to make comparison between the dimensions clear, the descriptive statistics are presented in a table enabling at-a-glance reference to the ranking of speakers according to their overall mean score and mean scores for both 'high-ranking' and 'friendly' dimensions.

Table 5.5 Comparison of rankings along both 'friendly' and 'high-ranking' dimensions

Speaker	Home town provenance	Rank order for friendly	Rank order for high ranking	Rank order for combined
1	Newcastle, west	5	7	7
2	Leeds	4	6	6
3	Liverpool	2	4	3
4	London	7	1	2
5	Manchester	8	9	8
6	Middlesbrough	9	8	9
7	Newcastle, east	1	2	1
8	Sheffield	3	5	4
9	Sunderland	6	3	5

The compared rankings show that the rank order generally places speakers at the top of the ranking, in the middle of the table or at the bottom of the table with some consistency along

both dimensions. In most cases, judgements along the two dimensions seem to be parallel, with difference in ranking of only two places (three in the case of SUN). The notable exception to this trend is LON who is ranked at the top of the table for 'high-ranking' but close to the bottom of the table for 'friendly'. It would appear that the standard speaker is judged differently than speakers of northern varieties of English, with scores along the two dimensions operating in opposition, whereas for other speakers they appear to be in agreement. This descriptive data thus indicates that not only are some speakers differentiated from each other along each dimension, but the way in which the dimensions relate to each other differs between speakers.

The above description of rankings suggests that in keeping with previous attitudinal study, the speaker of SSBE (LON) is preferred when evaluated on the status dimension but disfavoured when evaluated along the social attractiveness dimension. However, the ranking chart indicates that all of the other speakers are ranked similarly across both dimensions. This is surprising, given that speakers of non-standard varieties are frequently downgraded for the social status dimension and upgraded for the social attractiveness dimension (Giles and Watson 2013). In order to examine more closely how scores along the dimensions relate to each other, I next use inferential statistics to analyse whether significant differences exist between scores along both of the dimensions.

5.2.1. Results of paired samples t-tests investigating differences between 'friendly' and 'high-ranking' scale ratings

In order to compare ratings for speakers along the 'friendly' and 'high-ranking' dimensions, paired samples t-tests were conducted. Paired samples t-tests can be used where the same participants have been measured in terms of their response to two different questions, provided that both measurements use the same scale. The present study used a repeated measures design to elicit responses from the same participants along two dimensions, ''friendly' and 'high-ranking', using the same ratings scale; scores out of ten. Paired samples t-tests were therefore an appropriate technique to test the difference between the means of the two dependent variables.

Table 5.6 Paired samples t-test results for each speaker, showing the difference between mean scores for 'Friendly' and 'High–ranking

	Friendly		High-ranking				
speaker	M	SD	M	SD	n	t	p
NCL W	6.04	1.69	5.12	1.73	150	**6.245***	.000
LDS	6.25	1.58	5.37	1.74	150	**6.733***	.000
LIV	6.54	1.69	5.86	1.59	149	**4.945***	.000
LON	5.30	2.06	7.24	2.04	149	**-8.505***	.000
MAN	5.31	1.92	4.76	1.90	149	**3.449***	.001
MID	5.02	1.83	4.84	1.87	149	1.075	.284
NCL E	7.52	1.72	6.28	1.85	149	**7.653***	.000
SHE	6.38	1.62	5.80	1.59	148	**4.085***	.000
SUN	5.84	1.75	5.98	1.71	147	-1.035	.302

* $p < .05$

As displayed in Table 5.6, there are statistically significant differences, at the .05 significance level, in 'friendly' and 'high –ranking' scores in response to seven of the nine cases, (the exceptions being MID and SUN). The results show that in most cases, speakers were rated more favourably for 'friendly' than for 'high ranking'. Only two of the speakers, LON and SUN, were awarded higher mean scores for high ranking than their mean score for friendly Therefore the only speaker with a statistically significant higher mean score for status than for social attractiveness is LON. The biggest difference in mean scores between the two measures is also found in the responses to LON.

These differences are illustrated as a bar graph in Figure 5-9, which presents the value of the difference between the mean scores, where the mean of status is subtracted from the mean of friendly. Results for each speaker are ranked in order of greatest *preference* for the friendly dimension.

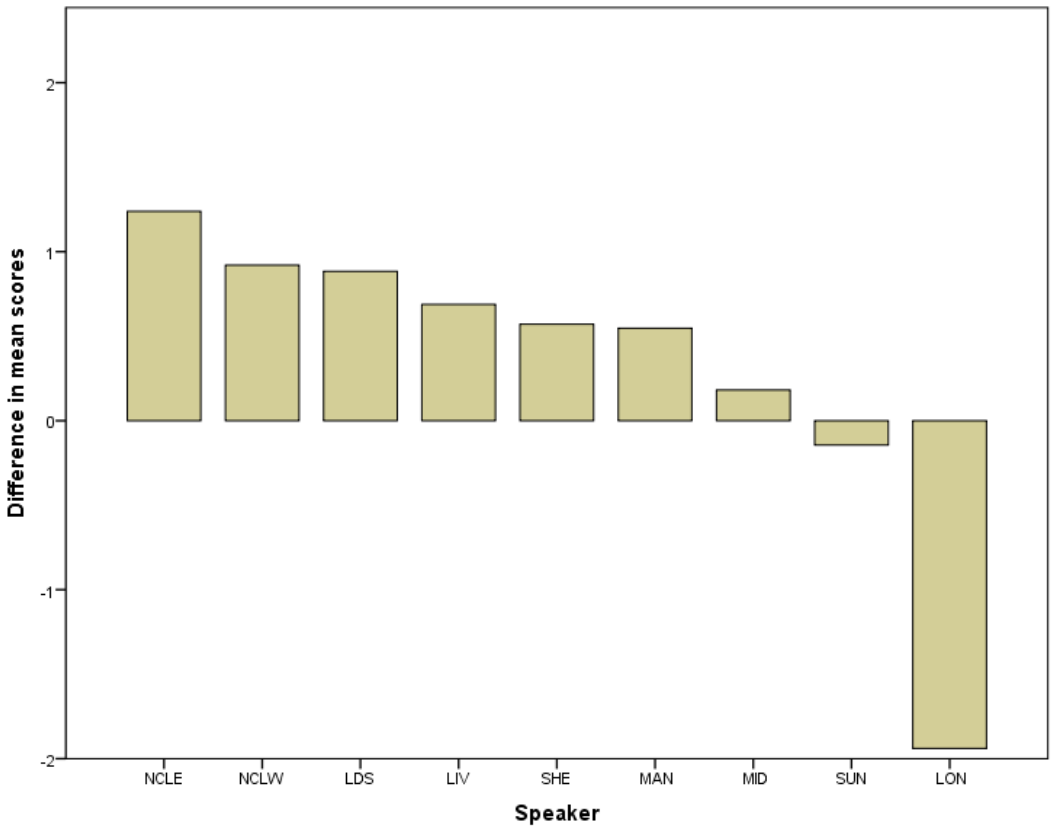

Figure 5-9 Differences in mean scores between friendly and high ranking evaluations ranked according to greatest preference for the friendly dimension.

All scores above zero show a more positive response on the friendly dimension than the high-ranking dimension. A higher score is therefore a score where the difference is greater between the means of friendly and of high-ranking scores. Negative scoring shows the value of the difference between mean scores where a higher mean score was given for the status dimension. It should be noted that scores below zero do not indicate a negative response on the friendly dimension.

It is interesting to note that among the seven speakers who were awarded higher scores for 'friendly' than 'high-ranking' (NCLE, NCLW, LDS, LIV, SHE, MAN, MID), the biggest difference in scores between the two dimensions occurs in response to both of the local speakers, i.e. participants were significantly more willing to agree that the local speaker gives an impression of a friendly university than to agree that the speaker gives the impression of a high-ranking university. This suggests that the Newcastle speakers are either considered either to be particularly socially attractive, or particularly low in status.

At the opposite extreme, the response to LON suggests that this speaker is considered to be either particularly high in status, or particularly lacking in social attractiveness.

The paired samples correlations shown in Table 5.7 indicate that despite the significant difference between ratings across the two dimensions, ratings along both dimensions are strongly associated with each other, LON being the only speaker where there was no significant correlation.

Table 5.7 Paired samples correlation between ‘friendly’ and 'high ranking’ ratings for each speaker

speaker	N	Correlation	Sig.
NCLE W	150	**.446***	.000
LDS	150	**.535***	.000
LIV	149	**.463***	.000
LON	149	.075	.362
MAN	149	**.485***	.000
MID	149	**.383***	.000
NCL E	149	**.391***	.000
SHE	148	**.438***	.000
SUN	147	**.519***	.000

Overall, the results of the t-test indicate that listeners are more likely to award higher scores in relation to the ‘friendly’ dimension than the ‘high-ranking’ dimension, but between-speaker differences appear to be related across both dimensions, with the exception of LON who is evaluated differently on the two scales.

The connection between results from the two scales is also corroborated by comparison of the cognitive maps produced by multi-dimensional scaling.

5.2.2. Comparison of friendly and high ranking results from multi-dimensional scaling

It is notable that when the ‘high ranking’ map is rotated, the positioning of speakers on the two-dimensional grid closely resembles the spacing of the results for the ‘friendly’ map, as shown in Figure 5-10. The ellipses in figure 5.6 represent the four-cluster solution found in responses to the ‘friendly’ dimension (see section 5.1.1.2). In order to highlight how the

positions of speakers, relative to each other, appear to be very similar on the friendly and high ranking maps, the same clusters have also been super-imposed onto the cognitive map for the 'high-ranking' dimension.

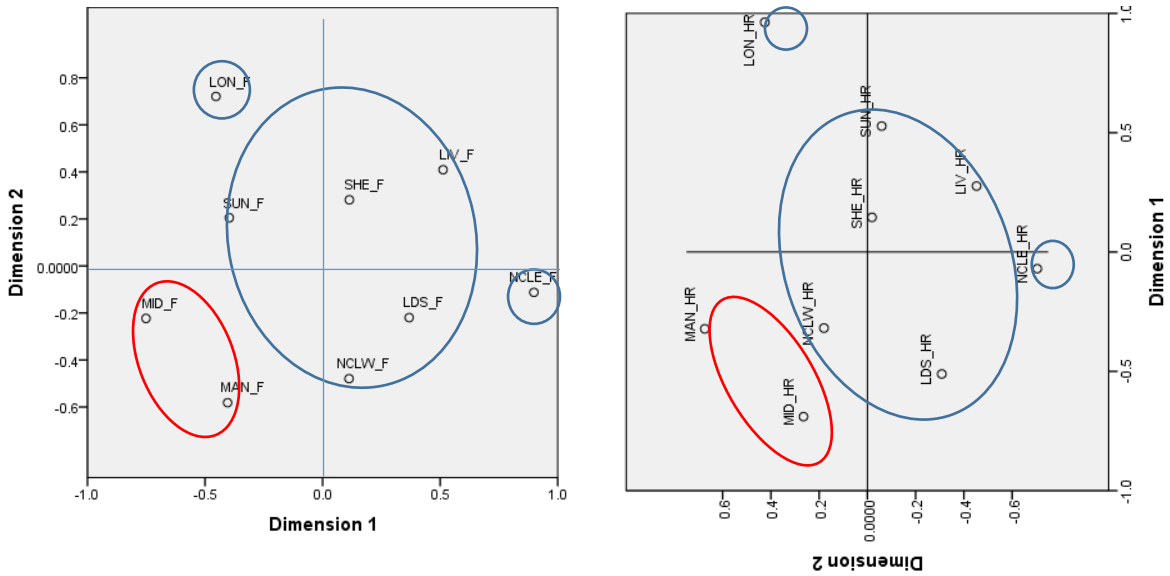

Figure 5-10 MDS maps of all responses to 'friendly'(F) and 'high ranking' (HR) statements in two dimensions.

Results of scaling for friendly and high-ranking responses appear to show an inter-relatedness of these two dimensions in response to each speaker. Thus, although participants were asked to rate the speakers according to only one dimension at a time, they seemingly attended to both dimensions of 'friendly and 'high ranking' in their scoring. In order to examine stereotypes of each speaker revealed by responses along both of the dimensions, the BIAS map was used as a framework to examine evaluations.

5.2.3. Comparison of the two dimensions using the framework of the stereotype content model

The BIAS map, as explained in chapter 2, outlines four stereotypes resulting from the four possible combinations of positive and negative scoring along the two dimensions identified by Cuddy et al (2007) as universal dimensions of person perception. Two factors in intergroup relations are considered to predict perceptions of warmth and competence, namely competition and status. Allies are perceived as warm, whereas competitors are not likely to be perceived as warm. High status correlates with a perception of competence,

whereas low status predicts a perception of incompetence. Thus, lack of competition predicts perceived warmth and status predicts perceived competence.

Stereotypes are often mixed or ambivalent. It is only to be expected that ambivalent responses will be evoked as a person could be favoured in terms of warmth but not in terms of competence and vice versa. In combination, perceptions of warmth and competence can result in four different intergroup emotions: admiration, contempt, envy, and pity, which are represented as four quadrants on the BIAS map.

The scores for each speaker according to the two dimensions, 'high-ranking' and 'friendly', were coded as either negative or positive. Table 5.8 shows scorings for each speaker, along both of the dimensions. The speakers are ranked according to overall positivity when scores for both dimensions are combined, where NCLE is the most positively evaluated speaker over-all, and MID is the most negatively evaluated speaker. Mean scores for each dimension are coded positive (p) where they are higher than the median rating of 5.5, or negative (n) where their mean score is lower than the median score on the 10-point evaluative scales.

Table 5.8 Scores for each speaker in both dimensions, coded as positive or negative, ranked most positive (1) to least positive (10)

Ranking according to combined score		Friendly Mean score		High-ranking Mean score	
1	NCLE	7.52	p	6.28	p
2	LON	5.30	n	7.24	p
3	LIV	6.54	p	5.86	p
4	SHE	6.39	p	5.80	p
5	SUN	5.83	p	5.98	p
6	LDS	6.25	p	5.37	n
7	NCLW	6.04	p	5.12	n
8	MAN	5.31	n	4.76	n
9	MID	5.02	n	4.84	n

The positive and negative evaluations were then considered in combination, to place each speaker into the appropriate quadrants of the BIAS map, as shown below in Figure 5-11. This model places groups into one of four quadrants, representing the possible combinations of high or low scorings along the two dimensions.

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="5">Warmth
(co-operative rather than competitive)
Friendliness, trustworthiness</td><td>high</td><td>Paternalistic stereotype
Pity
Low status, not competitive
(e.g. elderly, disabled)</td><td>Admiration
Pride
High status, not competitive
(e.g ingroup, close allies)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>LDS
NCLW</td><td>NCLE
LIV
SHE
SUN</td></tr>
<tr><td>low</td><td>Contemptuous stereotype
Scorn, disgust
Low status, competitive
(e.g.drug addict, poor people)</td><td>Envious stereotype
Envy
High status, competitive
(e.g. rich people)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>MAN
MID</td><td>LON</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>low</td><td>high</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Competence (high status relative to low status)
Capability, assertiveness</td></tr>
</table>

Figure 5-11 Stereotype content model groupings using the BIAS map (adapted from Cuddy et al, 2007)

5.2.4. Discussion of the relationship between the two dimensions

The combined total scores indicate that the participants favoured NCLE (one of the most local speakers) and LON (the standard speaker). Previous language attitude studies have consistently found that speakers are evaluated along two dimensions; status (sometimes also categorised as competence) and social attractiveness (also categorised as solidarity or warmth). Responses to speakers along the status dimension can indicate linguistic security or insecurity, while covert prestige can be demonstrated by compensatory valorisation of other speaker attributes associated with social attractiveness.

Results of the t-test seem at first glance to support the established understanding that the standard speaker would be upgraded in terms of status rather than social attractiveness whereas the speaker of a local variety would be upgraded in terms of social attractiveness rather than status. Both of the Newcastle speakers, NCLE and NCLW, were significantly more highly rated along the social attractiveness dimension than the status dimension, while the reverse was true for LON, the speaker of Standard Southern British English.

It is tempting to interpret this contrast between the 'standard' national variety of English and the local variety as evidence of covert prestige, whereby group members attempt to protect self-esteem by valorising the local voice according to an alternative dimension of prestige, as compensation for perception of low status. However, it should also be noted that despite the discrepancy between the 'friendly' and 'high-ranking' score, the responses to NCLE are positive in both dimensions. Moreover, the impression of friendliness score awarded to the standard speaker, LON, is nevertheless close to the median score, which does not indicate a strong perception of unfriendliness. Interpretation of the t-test then, should be cautious of suggesting that the higher scores for friendliness demonstrate covert prestige. Higher scores for friendliness in response to the majority of the speakers perhaps indicate that listeners were more confident in making judgements of an 'impression of a friendly university' than an 'impression of a high-ranking university'. Possibly, the voices presented in the speech stimulus, with the exception of LON, were not strongly associated with either high or low prestige, suggesting that this dimension seemed less pertinent to listeners.

The two-dimensional cognitive maps resulting from multidimensional scaling appeared to show remarkably similar spacing of speakers rated in response to the 'friendly' statement and the 'high-ranking 'statement. This is interesting in the light of recent language attitude

research towards Multicultural London English, which did not find evidence of the traditional dichotomy between status and social attractiveness (Kircher & Fox 2019). To account for this, the writers suggested that the uni-dimensional response might indicate that the modern variety was 'not yet associated with pervasive and consensual social stereotypes', in contrast with varieties such as Geordie, identified as a 'traditional long-established non-standard variety' (Kircher &Fox p 10). In the present study, which examines the extent to which such established perceptions of the social meanings of Geordie speech community membership hold true for a new generation, the two dimensions were correlated in the paired samples correlations, and appeared to be interlinked in the results of multi-dimensional scaling. This invites speculation that the attitudinal profile found by Kircher and Fox in response to the multicultural contact variety in London, may not be limited to the London context where stereotypes are not yet established for a new contact variety, but could possibly extend to other situations where established stereotypes are being disrupted.

As noted above, significantly lower scores along one dimension does not necessarily mean that this dimension is evaluated negatively. Using the stereotype content model as a framework, the BIAS map demonstrated that in many cases speakers were perceived as all-good or all-bad.

5.3. **Degree of difference**

In sections 5.1 and 5.2, responses to speakers of nine 'nested' varieties of English speech have been considered in terms of stereotypes associated with speakers of these varieties. In order to confirm whether listeners include themselves as members of a speech community of similar speakers, it is also important to establish the extent to which listeners perceive their own way of speaking to be shared with these speakers.

The degree of difference task is widely used in perceptual dialectology to identify whether participants consider the speech of geographically bounded speech areas to differ from their own. Coupland and Bishop (2007) found 'an accent identical to my own' to be the most favoured of all voices. However surprisingly few studies have used such a measure to establish whether the speakers that participants evaluate are perceived to be like their own. In order to find out whether the more local voices were 'claimed' by the participant group,

a degree of difference item was included in the responses to the speaker stimulus. This measure used a 10-point scale between the bipolar statements:

'The speaker sounds exactly like me.' and

'The speaker sounds totally different from me.'

5.3.1. Variation between speakers according to mean scores.

A one-way repeated measures ANOVA was conducted to compare scores on the degree of difference scale in response to each of the nine speakers. The means and standard deviations of ratings are presented in table 5.12. There is a significant effect for speaker, Wilks' Lambda =.586, *F* (8.138) =12.21, p= <0.5 (p=.000), multivariate partial eta squared =.414, which suggests a large effect size (Cohen 1988).

Table 5.9 Ranking of mean values and standard deviations of scores for degree of difference (in ascending order, 1=least different) perceived between participants own voice and the voice of each speaker (N=146)

ranking	speaker	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
1	NCLE	5.158	2.8616	146
2	NCLW	5.562	2.6155	146
3	SUN	5.596	2.3151	146
4	MID	6.445	2.3519	146
5	SHE	6.877	2.1556	146
6	MAN	6.993	2.1156	146
7	LON.	7.195	2.7123	146
8	LDS.	7.387	2.0635	146
9	LIV	7.483	2.3211	146

The mean scores identified the local voices as most similar, followed by the local area north-east voices (SUN and MID) in order of geographical proximity. The results for the rest of the northern regional voices did not follow in the same sequence suggesting some conceptual boundary of similarity had been crossed. The voice with the highest mean score

for degree of difference was LIV. Two of the northern region voices, LDS and LIV were perceived to be more different from the participant group than was the standard southern speaker (LON).

In order to ascertain where the significant differences were to be found between the ranked speakers, post hoc tests were run. The hierarchical ranking of the nine speakers for degree of difference is summarised below, in descending order of similarity. Bold type and an asterisk indicates where there is a significant difference in scores ($p < 0.05$) between evaluations of speakers within the hierarchy.

Newcastle East

Newcastle West

Sunderland

Middlesbrough*

Sheffield

Manchester

London

Leeds

Liverpool

The hierarchy appears to suggest that geographical locality is important in perception of similarity and difference between the voices presented in the speech stimulus and the listeners' own voices. The mean scores for degree of difference from the participants own voice do not differ significantly between the three most local speakers, NCLE. NCLW and SUN. Significant difference was fund between ratings of the most local speakers and MID. Thereafter, no further significant differences are found between the remaining ranked speakers. This supports the suggestion that beyond a perceptual boundary at Middlesbrough, participants do not distinguish between voices in terms of similarity and difference from their own voice.

The full table of pairwise comparisons reveals that the significant differences found between each pair of speakers do appear to fall into two groupings, although MID is something of a misfit, being rated significantly differently than six out of the other eight speakers. Table 5.10, below, shows all of the pairwise comparisons between speakers. Statistically significant differences are again indicated by an asterisk and are in bold type. The results are reported in rank order (descending) with the smallest degree of difference (NCLE) at the top and to the left of the table, and the speaker with the greatest degree of difference (LIV) at the bottom and to the right of the table.

Table 5.10 Significant differences between the mean scores for each speaker for perceived degree of difference with the participants' own voice

Speaker	NCLE	NCLW	SUN	MID	SHE	MAN	LON	LDS	LIV
NCLE									
NCLW	1.000								
SUN	1.000	1.000							
MID	**.000***	**.001***	**.003***						
SHE	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	1.000					
MAN	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	**.049***	1.000				
LON.	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	.484	1.000	1.000			
LDS.	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	.090	.610	1.000		
LIV	**.000***	**.000***	**.000***	**.001***	.091	.398	1.000	1.000	

(Bonferroni adjusted)

NCLE, NCLW and SUN seem to form a 'most local' group, rated significantly differently than all other speakers, supporting the suggestion that geographical locality is influential in perception of the degree of difference between the speaker's voice and the listeners' perception of their own voice. A 'wider regional' group appears to include all of the northern speakers beyond the north-east (SHE, MAN, LDS and LIV) and also LON. None of these speakers is rated significantly differently from each other, demonstrating that beyond the north-east, in comparison with the listeners' perception of their own voice, other northern voices are not perceived as significantly more similar than is the standard southern voice. MID is rated significantly differently than six of the other speakers. Seemingly, MID

is perceived to sound different not only from local voices but also from wider regional and national voices.

Multi-dimensional scaling combined with cluster analysis was performed in order to clarify the underlying structure of perceived differences.

5.3.2. Results of multi-dimensional scaling and cluster analysis of all responses to speakers along the 'degree of difference' scale

Multi-dimensional scaling was performed on all responses to the degree of difference question: 'How different is the speaker from your own way of speaking?' In order to make reading the chart more intuitive, the scores for degree of difference are reversed, so 10 is the most similar.

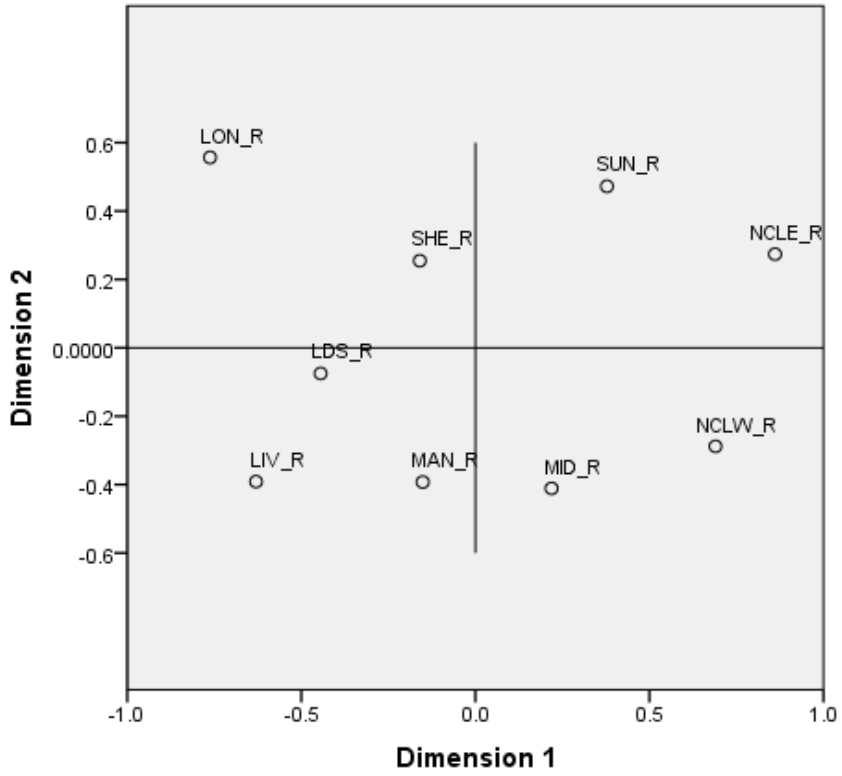

Figure 5-12 MDS perceptual map of impressions of degree of difference from the participant's own voice, in response to the scale: the speaker sounds exactly like/ totally different from me.

R= reversed score for degree of difference. 10 =exactly like me.

An initial visual inspection of the configuration indicates that in relation to the horizontal axis, results are interpretable as representing increasing perceived similarity with the voice towards the right of the map. In this cognitive map in two dimensions, NCLE is the speaker

most associated with an impression of sounding similar to the participants, and LON the least similar, or most different. The ratings of degree of difference follow a pattern of geographical proximity. The only speaker 'out of place' when ranked by distance from Newcastle is LDS, who should be placed closer to home than SHE if one goes purely on geographical distance principles. According to this interpretation, the two most localized speakers are associated with an impression of sounding similar to the participants, followed by the two local area speakers from the northeast of England. All of the speakers from the north east area are dispersed within the right-hand quadrants. The other northern speakers are more different and LON, the furthest of all from the 'Home' voice of Newcastle, is least associated with the participants own voice.

In two dimensions, the speakers seem to form a loose circular grouping, with LON as an outlier to the group, identified as having a particularly different way of speaking. This contrasts with the ANOVA findings, where LON was significantly differently rated from only the three 'most local' speakers. The vertical dimension seemed possibly to be indicative of the evaluative responses to the speakers, as the speakers mapped below the x axis, MAN , MID , NCLW and LDS reflect those that were evaluated less positively overall (as we saw in Table 5.5). However, LIV appears to be an anomaly in this reading of the data, as LIV appears towards the bottom of the y- axis, yet was a favoured speaker.

Hierarchical cluster analysis was conducted to examine whether meaningful groupings, or 'clusters' could be interpreted from the distances mapped in the MDS cognitive map. The resulting clusters of speakers are shown on the icicle plot in Figure 5-13, which shows the results of cluster analysis of all responses in response on the degree of difference scale.

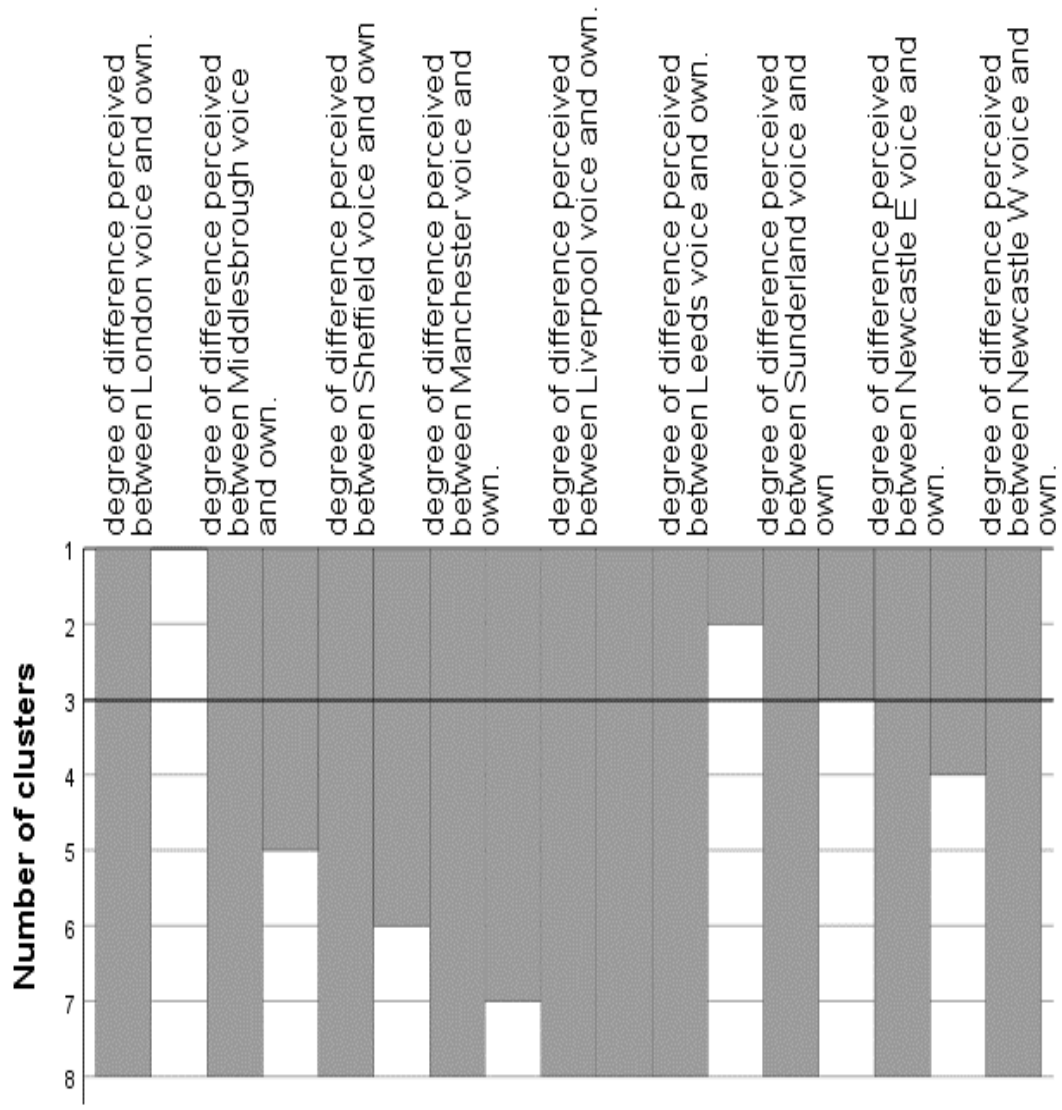

Figure 5-13 Icicle plot of the cluster solutions obtained by hierarchical cluster analysis, where cases are 'degree of difference' scores for each speaker, with a reference line on the y-axis indicating a three-cluster solution

The icicle plot (shows that a two-cluster solution would separate LON from all northern speakers. Taking into consideration the findings of the ANOVA, where three of the northern speakers appear to form a 'most local' grouping (NCLE, NCLW, SUN), a three-cluster solution (which replicates this finding) seems to provide a better description of the data. The three-cluster solution divides the 'most local' speakers from the rest of the northern speakers (MID, SHE, MAN, LIV, LDS), as shown in Figure 5-14, which superimposes the clusters on the MDS map.

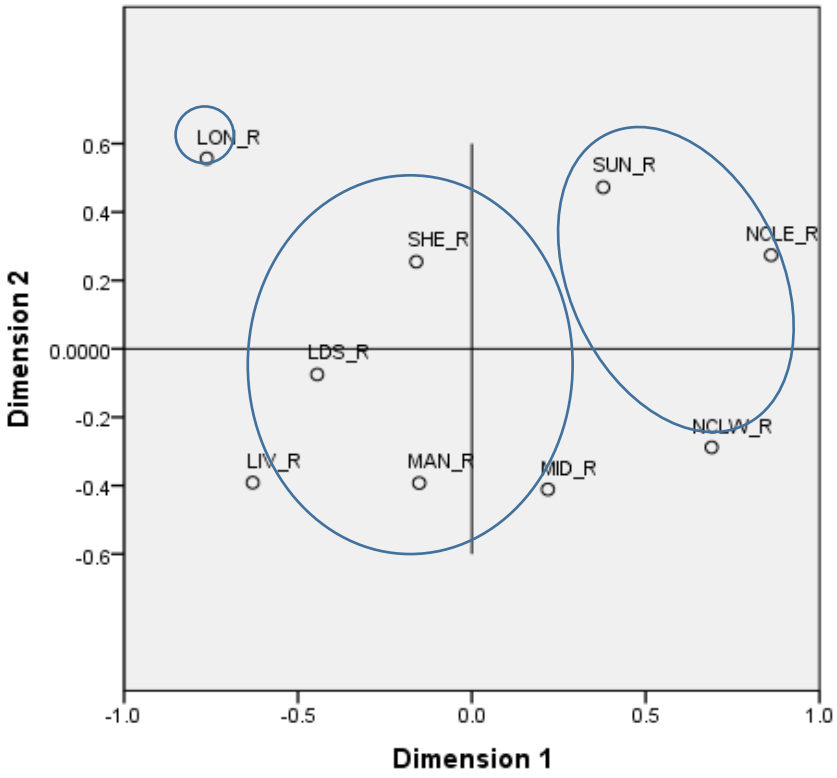

Figure 5-14 Three-cluster solution obtained by hierarchical cluster analysis of responses on the degree of difference scale, combined with the perceptual map output from MDS.

5.4. **Summary**

The 'friendly' and 'high-ranking' dimensions examined in section 5.1 were considered as indicators of ingroup preference for varieties of English spoken in the north of England, at different levels of locality. The statistics presented in section 5.1 indicate that listeners could distinguish between speakers, perceiving some speakers more favourably than others. In terms of over-all favour or disfavour, ingroup preference appears to be expressed in favour of the local speaker NCLE, although this does not extend to the other Newcastle speaker NCLW. Along the *friendly* dimension, there is a statistically significant preference for a local speaker, NCLE, whilst on the *high-ranking* dimension there is a statistically significant preference for the 'standard' speaker, LON. There is little evidence of linguistic insecurity among this participant group in this situated context, as mean scores for the most local speaker, NCLE are high along both dimensions The standard speaker, LON appears to be evaluated differently than the other speakers. Responses suggest outgrouping of southern speech, but ambivalence in responses to northern varieties. The levels of locality identified as potentially important in evaluations did not appear to influence results.

In section 5.2 the results indicate that perceptions differ between the two dimensions in that, with the exception of SUN, participants are significantly more likely to evaluate all northern speakers positively along the *friendly* dimension than the *high-ranking* dimension. Nevertheless, the two dimensions do not appear to be oppositional. Speakers who were awarded higher mean scores on the *friendly* dimension also tend to have higher mean scores on the *high-ranking* dimension. Multi-dimensional scaling for *friendly* and *high ranking* responses appears to support the suggestion that the two dimensions are inter-related in response to each speaker.

In section 5.3, the three most local varieties were acknowledged as being less different from the participants' own voice than less local varieties, although slightly different rankings for the degree of difference responses emerged from ANOVA analysis of mean scores than from multidimensional scaling. The results of MDS indicate that there is an awareness of difference which is in agreement with geographical proximity. This may possibly even extend to an awareness of difference at a highly localized level between the two Newcastle speakers. Cultural prominence of the Liverpool variety of speech may also contribute to perception of difference from LIV, which is the most geographically distant of the northern voices.

The case of NCLE appears to support previous evidence where the conceptual label 'a voice identical to my own' was the most preferred voice of all (Coupland and Bishop 2007), as NCLE is the most claimed and the most favoured speaker. However, ingroup favour does not extend to the other Newcastle speaker (NCLW), and the degree of perceived similarity does not seem to influence preferences for other speakers.

Language change, led by young people, has been well documented in Newcastle (e.g. Watt and Milroy 1999, Watt 2002). It has been suggested that this change is in the direction of a supraregional northern standard, resisting accommodation towards a southern standard. This resistance to diffusion of southern-sounding variants appears to be reflected in attitudinal responses that position the southern speaker as 'other' to northern speakers. Some of the inconsistency in responses to local and wider regional voices is perhaps indicative of disruption of traditional stereotypes. For these young people, it appears, the shifting reality of *how it sounds* to be Geordie complicates perception of *what it means* to sound Geordie.

Chapter 5 has provided evidence that evaluations of local, regional and national varieties of speech suggest ambivalence in the social meanings associated with them. In order to explore what concepts are important in constructing attitudes to the speakers of local, regional and national varieties, chapter 6 investigates free-chosen responses to the speakers.

Chapter 6: **Results and discussion part 2: keyword impressions data**

Overview

This chapter complements and extends the analysis of the ratings scales discussed in chapter 5, by exploring attitudinal responses elicited by a free-response technique. Using the 'keywords' method developed by Peter Garrett (e.g., Garret et al 2003, 2005, 2006), participants were asked to provide three 'keyword' responses in time-constrained conditions in order to capture their immediate impressions of the speakers. The keywords study was conducted to investigate key concepts of importance to listeners. As it is thought that lexical choices reflect the contemporary language and culture of a society (Fairclough 2003), the word-associations may provide a key, not only to the ways in which specific prototypical speakers are perceived, but also the familiar cultural assumptions that are taken for granted by listeners.

The aims of the chapter are twofold. Firstly, adoption of the same analytical frameworks as those used in chapter 5 serves as a triangulation method, again addressing RQ1, which aims to reveal contemporary attitudes towards local speech through analysis of evaluations. Hence, impressions of speakers are analysed quantitatively, and interpreted in terms of favour and disfavour, stereotypes and in-group membership. Secondly, RQ2 seeks to qualitatively interpret the 'reduced text' resulting from the keywords technique. In order to address RQ2(i) and RQ2(ii), thematic coding of responses to speakers was undertaken in order to reveal the concepts important to participants in forming impressions of speakers, which may then be interpreted as pointers to societal ideological assumptions. Thematic analysis also addresses RQ2(iii) by looking at listener strategies for distancing and connecting in positioning the self in relation to the speaker.

Structure of the current chapter

As in chapter 5, before presenting the results from the task, the chapter begins by outlining the techniques selected for analysis. This includes an outline of the process of thematic coding adopted for semantic analysis and inferential analysis of word associations, followed by discussion of two meanings of the term 'keywords', as both of these are used in the chapter.

Section 6.1 uses content analysis to compare between-speaker differences in word-associations, in terms of frequencies of participant responses, positivity and negativity in responses and status and social attractiveness attribution. Section 6.2 discusses important concepts used to form impressions of speakers. Subdivisions of this section report and discuss the results from three reduced datasets.

Tools for analysis of results from the keyword association task

Key words as a semantic 'key' to indexed meanings

Keywords are word associations. In word association tasks, participants are asked to provide the first words that come to mind in response to a given stimulus word. It seems that a word association task will be revealing of the concept's defining characteristics (Vivas et al 2017) and captures 'meaning that reflects mental representations that include properties about connotation, scripts and themes' (De Deyne et al 2019).

In the discussion that follows, the responses are analysed with reference to the social characteristics that are indexed by the varieties in question. The concept of social indexicality posits that linguistic forms take on social meaning and index social characteristics in addition to denotational meaning (Silverstein 2003, Eckert 2008, Johnstone 2009). Hence, the keywords give a 'key' to these indexed meanings in relation to the varieties of speech presented in the speech stimulus. They can thus be revealing of underlying concepts which shape responses to each speaker, and by extension the stereotypes which are associated with each variety of English.

The process of thematic coding

The process of thematic coding analyses a text in order to ascertain a "framework of thematic ideas about it" (Gibbs 2007). The analytic process requires intensive reading in which the researcher sifts through the data at three levels of scrutiny: *description*, *categorisation* and *analysis*.

Thematic analysis usually begins with initial coding of text or discourse, whereby labels are attached to phrases or other sequences of text in order to identify ideas at a descriptive level. In the present study, the responses to the speech stimulus were elicited as a collection of short phrases capturing the associations formed by listening to each speaker, meaning

that each keyword constitutes such an initial code. Categorisation is a process whereby semantic links are sought between different codes in order to segment the data into key topics. Higher levels of analysis interpret themes, which are revealing of the ways in which topics are conceptualised. In practice, these two stages often occurred simultaneously, during close reading of the data set.

Thematic analysis of the data was undertaken in order to identify which concepts and topics are important for young people in Newcastle when responding to different regionally marked ways of speaking. Firstly, a top-down approach was used, to categorise data according to two themes which have been demonstrated in previous research to be important dimensions in speaker evaluation, i.e. *status and social attractiveness.* Open coding was then undertaken, to identify key topics and latent themes that emerge as important to the participant group when forming impressions of speakers.

'Keywords' and 'keyness'

In corpus linguistics, the term keywords has a different and specific meaning to that outlined above. Scott (1997 p 236) defined a "key word" as "a word which occurs with unusual frequency in a given text […] by comparison with a reference corpus of some kind". A keyword tool allows the researcher to make this comparison in frequency by measuring the frequency of a word in a focus corpus with the frequency of the same word in a reference corpus. This procedure not only identifies whether the word is unusually frequent in the focus corpus, but also calculates whether the difference in frequency is statistically significant. The measure of this unusualness is its *keyness strength*, so those words with a significantly different strength from those in the reference corpus are called *keywords.*

<u>The reference corpus and focus corpora</u>

In the present study, the focus corpus is a subset of the reference corpus, created as part of a repeated measures design. The keyword list tool was used to identify distinctiveness in impressions of an individual speaker in comparison with the reference corpus of the combined wordlists of impression terms in response to all speakers.

<u>Statistical measures of keyness</u>

Descriptive measures of frequency can identify which concepts seem to be more important in forming impressions of speakers of different varieties. Statistical measures can be used

to establish whether these differences are significant. Scott's definition of keywords emphasises the *relative frequency* of words in the two compared corpora, and one issue of current debate centres on whether effect size or statistical significance are more useful as measures of frequency differences.

Gabrielatos (2018 p 16) suggests that 'the level of keyness of an item needs to be established via the combination of two metrics, i.e effect size and statistical significance, which complement each other. Log-likelihood is the most commonly used significance test. It uses four terms in computing keyness values; the number of occurrences of the word, and the number of possible occasions on which the word could have been selected (i.e., the total number of words) both in the focus corpus and the reference corpus. This calculation takes into account the relative size of each corpus, so observed absolute frequencies are used. The most prevalent metric, log-likelihood, can be interpreted as equivalent to a *p*-value The higher the keyness value, the more significant is the difference between the two frequency scores. A log-likelihood of 3.8 or higher is significant at the level of $p<0.05$ and a keyness value of 6.6 or higher is significant at $p<0.01$ (Rayson and Garside, 2000).

The settings set out in Figure 6-1, which combine log-likelihood with %DIFF measures, were selected as the most appropriate for the keyword search. At this selected statistic threshold, a keyness value of 6.63, any keywords identified can be considered to have a *p*-value of $p< 0.01$.

Keyword statistic	Log-likelihood (4 term)
Keyword statistic threshold	P<0.01 (6,63)
Keyword effect size measure	Gabrielatos and Marchias %DIFF
Keyword effect size threshold	All Values

Figure 6-1 The settings options selected in the AntConc software to run the keyword analysis

6.1. Evaluations of speakers revealed by the impression terms

This section considers the impression terms as evaluative lexical repertoires demonstrating favour and disfavour towards speakers along the 'big two' dimensions, status and social attractiveness. In order to allow for quantitative content analysis of this data, each impression term was firstly coded as either positive or negative, and secondly coded as referencing the 'big two' dimensions of person perception. Both of these processes were necessarily subjective, as demonstrated by illustrative examples. During this process of coding, emergent semantic categories were also developed, which form the basis of discussion in subsequent sections.

6.1.1. Frequencies of responses to each speaker

Participants had been invited to respond quickly to each speaker by supplying up to three words or comments to describe the impression formed of the speaker. Each of the 153 participants had the opportunity to record three responses for each speaker. However, some participants chose to make fewer responses. Table 6.1 shows the total number of keyword responses recorded for each speaker out of the possible 459. As the 'keywords' include both single word and a multi-word comments, this calculation is based on the frequencies of filled cells, once the data had been collated in excel rather than counts of individual words.

Table 6.1 Completion rates of responses to each speaker (max possible 459)

Speaker	Total responses	% completed
NCL W	392	85
LDS	354	77
LIV	333	73
LON	373	81
MAN	364	79
MID	350	76
NCL E	374	81
SHE	323	70
SUN	309	67
	3172	

Percentages are rounded to nearest whole number

Table 6.1 shows that none of the speakers elicited a full set of responses. Some of the participants submitted only one response per speaker, suggesting that the limitation of three responses per participant gave enough scope for them to record their impressions. Moreover, the response rate varies between speakers. Initial enthusiasm for the task appears not to have been sustained until the final speaker, perhaps indicating listener fatigue. Nonetheless, the evaluation scales, (reported in chapter 5) which were completed straight after this task, were completed fully, suggesting that listener fatigue alone is not responsible for this result. It seems reasonable to assume that the level of responsiveness is indicative of listener engagement, hence the speakers who were more interesting to participants seem to be the two 'local' Newcastle speakers and the 'national standard' SSBE speaker.

6.1.2. Coding for positivity and negativity in the responses to the speakers

As an initial overview of the data, total numbers of positive and negative responses towards speakers were collated. To reach this overview, it was necessary to gauge each word to be either a positive or a negative type, or where this was not possible, to allocate it to neutral grouping. In many cases this judgement was unproblematic. For instance, the two most frequently occurring words, 'boring' and 'friendly' were interpreted as having negative and positive connotations respectively. Allocation of other responses to a positive, negative, or neutral grouping was not entirely straightforward, requiring consideration of their *pertinence* in the context (Purschke 2015). Explanation of the examples 'loud' and 'fast' are given below to indicate the interpretations of situational significance required at this stage of the coding.

Words relating to the pace or pitch might in many circumstances be considered neutral, but bearing in mind the context, in which the participants were giving their impressions of speakers who might be coming into school to talk to them, neutral words such as 'loud' or 'fast' could be interpreted as being appropriate or inappropriate, and thus having positive or negative connotation. One of the expectations participants might have of such ambassadors could be that their voices ought to be 'loud and clear', since the phrase would be familiar to participants as a criterion for assessing speaking tasks in the classroom. Therefore, 'loud' might be considered positive in this context. Similarly, considering expectations participants would have of the speaker role, 'fast' might be considered negative as students are frequently advised not to rush when delivering their own speeches in classroom situations. Nevertheless, in some cases the expectations of students could not

be assumed, meaning that the word could not be assigned to either positive or negative loading.

Some of the responses, moreover, did not lend themselves to coding across the board. A key point about such attitudinal meaning-making is that individual lexical items typically do not have fixed attitudinal meanings that are stable across all settings. Accordingly, contextual corroboration for the researcher's judgements was sought by looking at the concordances of each individual word. In this re-contextualised setting, the implication of some of the words became more apparent, sometimes giving rise to contradictory interpretations of particular words. As all data were collected anonymously, participants are referenced by their ID code.

Participant 24 uses the keyword 'fast' to describe the West Newcastle speaker (NCLW), which as previously mentioned may be negative in this situational context. The other keywords supplied by this participant are 'unenthusiastic' and 'doesn't care'. The keyword 'fast' here seems likely to imply negativity. 'Fast' was a widely used keyword in response to the Liverpool speaker (LIV), predominantly with a negative connotation, sometimes explicitly stated as 'too fast'. Positive connotation was considered more likely, however, when 'fast speaking' was paired with 'informative' in participant 73's response to LIV. In this case, it seems that the perception that the speaker is fast is reconciled with a positive impression of the speaker by rationalising that more information could be conveyed within the time frame by a fast speaker.

Similarly, contradictory meanings appeared to be associated with the keyword 'slow'. Participant 47 uses the keyword 'slow' to describe the West Newcastle speaker (NCLW). The other keywords supplied are 'understandable' and 'clear'. Hence 'slow' in this context is almost certainly positive, with the connotation of 'slowly and carefully'. In contrast, participant 74 also uses the keyword 'slow' to describe the same speaker (NCLW), alongside the keywords 'boring' and 'dull', resulting in a negative- type coding for the same word.

Consequently, the 3,172 responses were each coded for positivity and negativity on an individual word-by-word basis, before any more developed thematic coding was attempted.

6.1.2.1. ***Results of positively and negatively coded impressions***

Table 6.2 shows the frequencies of positive and negative evaluations. As response rates varied (as shown in Table 6.1) and as differing proportions of neutral responses were given to each speaker, clearer comparison can be made between speakers by including percentage values of positive and negative responses, which are included in the table alongside the raw frequencies. The frequencies and percentages of positive and negative responses are shown in the order in which the speakers were presented to participants.

Table 6.2 Frequencies and percentages of positive and negative evaluations in keywords given in response to each speaker. (Higher frequencies are highlighted in bold.)

Speaker	Frequency Positive	% positive	Frequency Negative	% negative
NCL W	148	38	**185**	**47**
LDS	**174**	**49**	138	39
LIV	**167**	**50**	110	33
LON	**170**	**46**	128	34
MAN	82	23	**249**	**68**
MID	86	25	**228**	**65**
NCL E	**300**	**82**	42	11
SHE	**151**	**47**	103	31
SUN	121	39	**150**	**48**
Total	**1,399**	**44**	1,333	42

(Percentages are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number)

Table 6.2 shows that the total percentages of positive and negative responses are similar, with slightly more positive responses (44%) than negative responses (42%).

The proportion of positive and negative words varies considerably between speakers, with little apparent influence of order effects on the preferences. A comparison with the completion rates shown in Table 6.1 suggests that greater engagement with the speaker, as shown by higher response rates, is not related to the degree to which the speaker is favoured. The two local speakers drew high response rates, but whereas one of these, NCLW,

attracted more negative than positive associations, on the other hand NCLE was highly favoured, with a greater proportion of positive responses.

The bar chart presented in Figure 6-2 presents the reader with a clearer picture of the differences in positive and negative impressions recorded for each speaker. Neutral responses are also recorded on this graph.

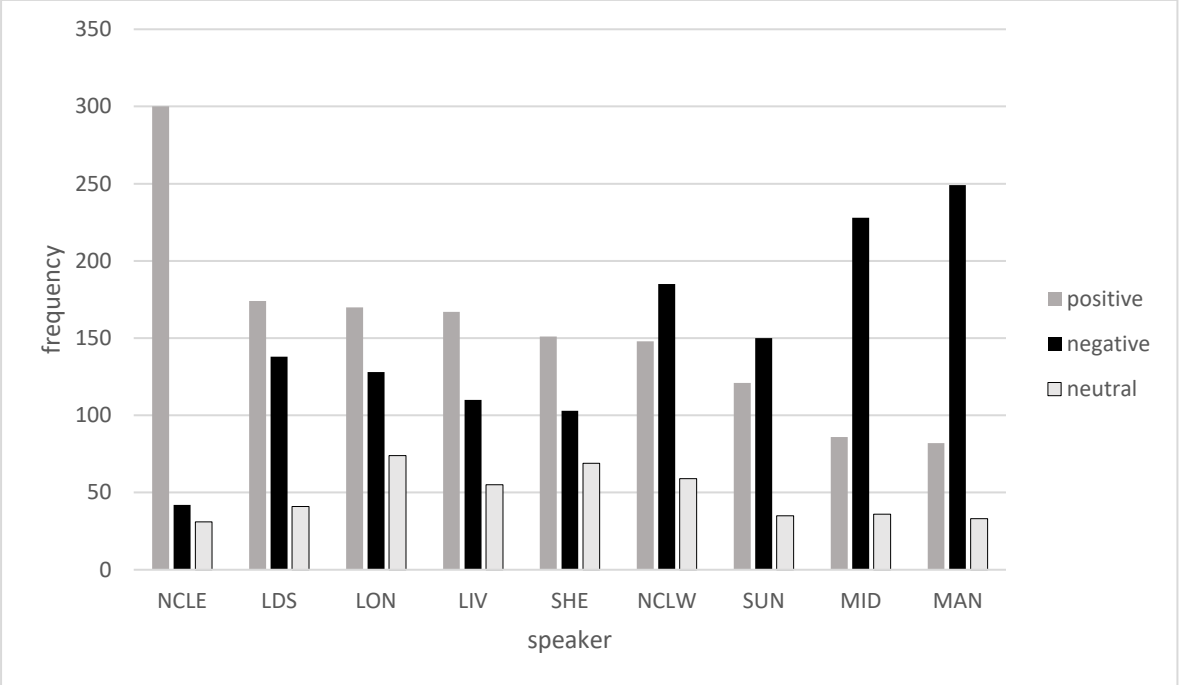

Figure 6-2 Bar chart showing frequencies of positive, negative and neutral responses to all speakers, ranked according to highest frequency of positive responses.

Figure 6-2 reveals that the local speaker, NCLE is the most highly favoured speaker with the highest number of positive comments and the lowest number of negative comments. The 2nd 3rd 4th and 5th ranking speakers, LDS, LON, LIV and SHE seem to be moderately favoured, having higher proportions of positive than negative comments. The other Geordie speaker, NCLW, along with SUN, is less favoured, with negative impressions more prevalent than positive. The two least favoured speakers are MAN and MID, both having a much higher frequency of negative than positive comments.

6.1.2.2. ***Discussion of positivity and negativity in response to speakers***

Overall levels of positivity are in contrast with the findings of Garett et al (2003) who found a prevalence of negative responses in keyword data collected from fifteen-year-old

respondents in a Welsh context. Garrett (2010) explains this negativity as a rejection of the possible identities at the identity moratorium stage of their development. The more positive responses reported in the present study may be an age-grading effect, due to the relative maturity of the participants, who, at age 17-18 were two or three years older. Alternatively, it is possible that greater tolerance of variation in language demonstrated by participants in the present study could be indicative of recent shifts in societal attitudes.

The frequencies of negative or positive associations support the finding in chapter 5 that two of the speakers (MAN and MID) are less favoured, and that one of the Newcastle speakers (NCLE) is particularly well-regarded. Fewer neutral terms were elicited in response to these speakers.

In order to gain clearer insight into how these preferences reflect ingroup responses and stereotypes of speakers, prevalence of status and social attractiveness connotations were next assessed.

6.1.3. Coding for themes of status and social attractiveness in responses to the speakers.

Consistent with the 'big two' (Fiske 2018) basic dimensions of social perception identified in the stereotype content model, i.e. competence and warmth (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002) a plethora of language attitude studies (e.g. Fuertes et al., 2012; Giles & Billings, 2004) have established that two dimensions, status and social attractiveness, are important in establishing ingroup identity in relation to speech community membership.

In the second stage of coding, each of the 3172 responses was categorised as belonging to either the status dimension, associated with such concepts as power, competence and social prestige or the social attractiveness dimension, associated with concepts such as friendliness, warmth and belonging. The traits that have been used in previous research were helpful in assigning the association words to the categories. In the trait descriptors used by Stewart et al (1985), four descriptors were used to represent social status traits (intelligent, confident, unsuccessful, unambitious) and four descriptors represented solidarity traits (trustworthy, sincere, unkind, unfriendly). More recently, Dragojevic et al (2019) used five similar descriptors to elicit responses along the same two dimensions, status and solidarity. The five status traits (i.e., intelligent, educated, smart, competent, successful) and five solidarity traits (i.e., friendly, nice, sociable, pleasant, honest) were

summed up as a judgement of ‘how educated’ and ‘how friendly’ the speaker sounded. These trait descriptors formed the basis of coding in the present study, where each of the impression terms provided by participants was assigned to either a status code or a social attractiveness code. In some cases, as in the previous coding for positivity and negativity, responses could not be ascribed to either dimension and were coded as neutral responses. Nevertheless, 81% of responses were coded along the ‘big two ‘dimensions, indicating the suitability of the framework for interpretation of free-chosen expressions.

6.1.3.1. ***Results of status and attractiveness coding of impressions***

The total frequencies of impression terms relating each code were calculated, revealing that a greater proportion of impressions related to the social attractiveness dimension than status, as shown in Figure 6-3

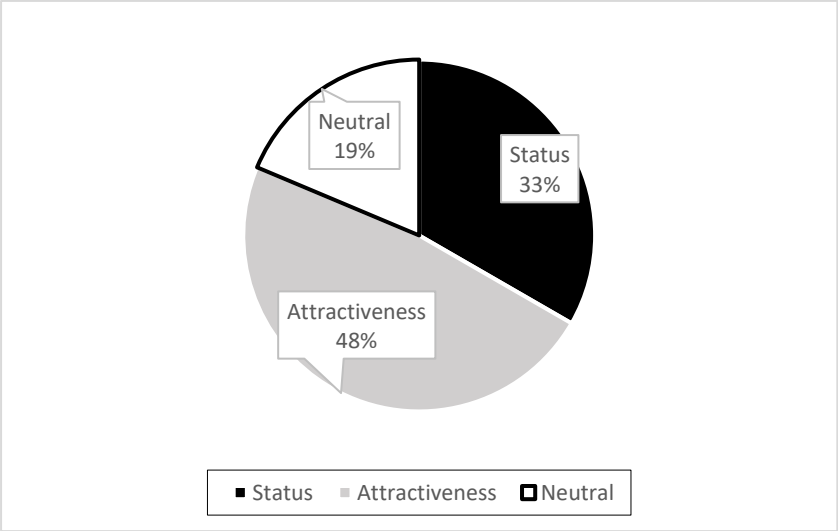

Figure 6-3 Pie chart showing the proportion of impression terms related to status or social attractiveness dimensions, and neutral coded terms.

In order to clarify whether attractiveness terms were more common in all cases, results were calculated for each speaker. Figure 6-4 shows the results for each speaker, comparing the frequencies of impressions related to the status dimension with those related to the social attractiveness dimension

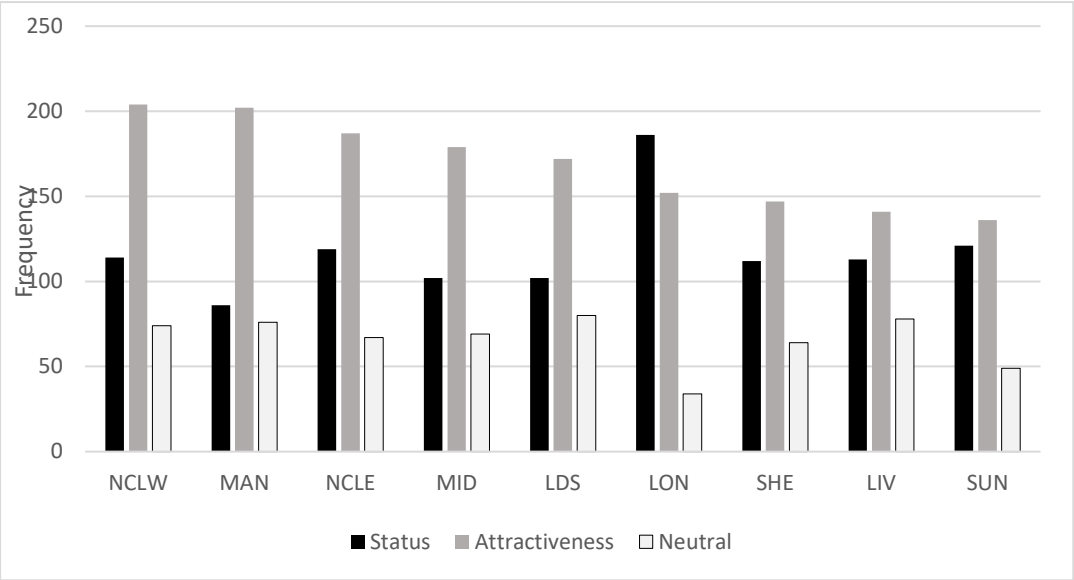

Figure 6-4 Frequencies for each speaker of words coded as Status, Attractiveness and Neutral, ranked according to highest frequency for attractiveness.

These results show that impressions of social attractiveness are predominant in responses to both favoured and disfavoured speakers. The clear exception is LON, who elicited a higher frequency of status-related comments. That is not to say that LON is more highly regarded in status terms, but status considerations seem to be more pertinent in responses to his voice.

6.1.3.2. *Discussion of frequencies of status and attractiveness keywords*

The prevalence of impressions relating to the social attractiveness dimension is particularly interesting, given the relatively status-orientated educational context of the data collection exercise. School pupils engaged in a selection procedure centred on an educational setting. Moreover, they participated within a formal lesson environment. Nevertheless, in the time-constrained conditions, their most immediately available responses have predominantly drawn on social attractiveness traits, supporting previous findings that perceptions of warmth are primary over perceptions of competence, being formed more rapidly and serving more fundamental psychological purpose (Fiske et al 2007; Abele & Bruckmüller, 2011).

6.1.4. Comparison of impressions along the two dimensions

Not only were different proportions of impressions related to status and solidarity found in response to each speaker, but also the negativity and positivity within each dimension

varied. In Figure 6-5, results coded to both dimensions are divided into positive and negative comments.

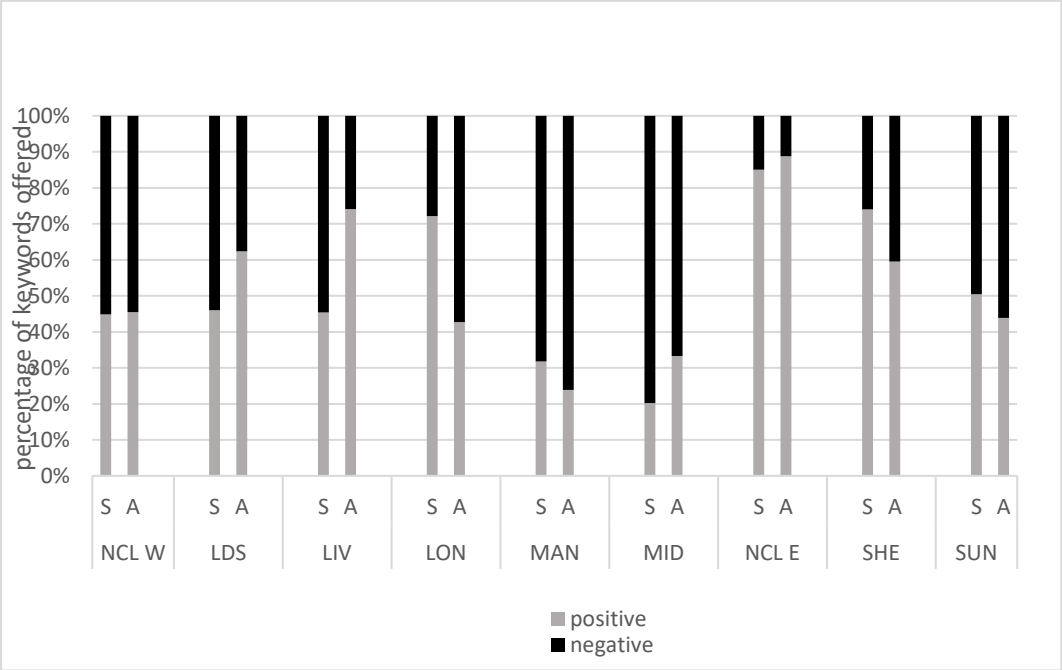

Figure 6-5 Bar chart showing proportion of positive and negative impressions, as percentage of each speaker's status (S) and social attractiveness (A) keywords.

Figure 6-5 shows that the positive comments identified in responses to NCLE are offered along both dimensions. The two highly disfavoured speakers, MAN and MID are also evaluated similarly across both dimensions. Responses to other speakers are somewhat indeterminate for two reasons. It is notable that in many cases, for instance in the status impressions for LDS and for SUN, there is a relatively even split between positive and negative comments, which cannot be as confidently interpreted as favour or disfavour. Additionally, ambivalent responses occur, for instance in impressions of LDS, LIV, LON, where favour and disfavour are shown along oppositional dimensions.

6.1.5. Comparison of the two dimensions using the framework of the stereotype content model

As in chapter 5, positive and negative results along both of the 'big two' dimensions of personal perception were mapped onto the stereotype content model's BIAS map, which identifies four stereotypes in interpersonal relations (Figure 6-6). This required the listeners' responses to be converted to a positive or negative score. Scoring for status or

social attractiveness was considered to be positive for any speaker where a greater proportion of the offered comments were positively rather than negatively coded. A more moderate impression of the speaker is indicated where responses are distributed within the median range of 40% to 60%. Speakers are identified in bold where impressions are more incontrovertibly positive or negative, and in italics where more moderate impressions were seen along both of the dimensions. Normal roman script indicates speakers where positivity or negativity was more definite on one of the dimensions, but not the other.

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="5">Warmth
(co-operative rather than competitive)
Friendliness, trustworthiness</td><td>high</td><td>Paternalistic stereotype
Pity
Low status, not competitive
(e.g. elderly, disabled)</td><td>Admiration
Pride
High status, not competitive
(e.g ingroup, close allies)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>LDS
LIV</td><td>NCLE
SHE</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">low</td><td>Contemptuous stereotype
Scorn , disgust
Low status, competitive
(e.g.drug addict, poor people)</td><td>Envious stereotype
Envy
High status, competitive
(e.g. rich people)</td></tr>
<tr><td>NCLW
MAN
MID</td><td>LON
SUN</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2"></td><td>low</td><td>high</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Competence (high status relative to low status)
Capability, assertiveness</td></tr>
</table>

Figure 6-6 Stereotype content model groupings using the BIAS map (adapted from Cuddy et al, 2007)

In the all-good group, indicating admiration, NCLE is highly favoured for both status and attractiveness, having over 80% positively coded comments for both status and solidarity coded keywords. SHE is also well-regarded, although not so overwhelmingly preferred, having over 60% of comments coded as positive along both dimensions. T

Two of the speakers, MAN and MID can be confidently placed in the all-bad group, indicating a contemptuous response, since well below half of their scores were positive on both dimensions. NCLW is also placed in this group, as scores along both dimensions were more negative than positive, but in this case the result is less definite, as comments on both of the dimensions were over 40% positive.

Two speakers are placed in each of the ambivalent groupings. LDS and LIV have high (over 60%) frequencies of positive comments for social attractiveness combined with negative comments for status, although it is worth noting that comments along this dimension were over 40% positive. The opposite ambivalence, high status with low warmth, suggests an envy stereotype, where admiration is combined with resentment. LON is placed in this grouping, suggesting that an envy response to SSBE speech still prevails among the respondent group. Somewhat unexpectedly, SUN shares this position, although as mentioned above, impressions of this speaker are less definitive.

6.1.5.1. ***Discussion of comparison along the two dimensions***

The predominance of social attractiveness comments in responses to speakers lends support to the view suggested in section 5.2.4, that this dimension was more important for listeners generally. The exception to this trend was LON, who not only received more comments relating to status than attractiveness, but also was favoured along the status dimension. Similarly, in the t-tests reported in section 5.2.1, LON was the only speaker to be evaluated significantly more favourably for status than for social attractiveness. Thus, the coded free-chosen word choices corroborate the evidence in chapter 5, that the speaker of Standard Southern British English is perceived differently than the northern speakers.

The BIAS map places groups (in this case represented by prototypical speakers) in four quadrants representing one ingroup and three different outgroups. The correlations between dimensions can reflect inequality in societies (Durante et al 2013; Durante and Fiske 2017), which is particularly interesting given the pervasive inequalities which have come to define

images of the north of England, as detailed in chapter 1. In societies with higher income equality, all citizens may be included in the ingroup category, where high–competence is associated with high-warmth. Most groups are considered all-good insiders (us) with some all-bad outsiders (them) and few ambivalent (mixed) stereotypes. Societies with greater inequality tend to view more groups as ambivalent. Durante et al (2013) suggest that this is because ambivalent stereotypes operate as a mechanism for justifying societal inequality. More successful groups are likely to be stereotyped as cold but competent, casting these groups as 'other', rather than as desirable reference groups. The 'pity' ambivalent (mixed) stereotype compensates for low status with high evaluations for social attractiveness, perpetuating the social order.

Distribution of the impressions of speakers using the BIAS map supports the findings in chapter 5 that the speaker of NCLE is particularly highly regarded as all-good, whereas two speakers, MAN and MID are markedly more stigmatised as all-bad. However, fewer speakers were placed in the 'all-good' quadrant, indicative of an ingroup or reference group, than was the case with the evaluation scores reported in section 5.2.4, cautioning against the implication that the young people in the present study hold a fairly egalitarian perspective.

The proportional weighting of positive and negative responses produced indeterminate results in several instances. Fiske et al (2002) also identified some groups that did not fall into the expected quadrants, forming a centralised cluster 'in the middle of the competence-warmth space'. This location on the map suggests a nondescript stereotype, not fitting any of the outgroup stereotype categories. Fiske et al suggest that there may be less consensus concerning stereotypes of these groups. According to this interpretation, impressions of speakers would be less strongly held or widely shared. The results found here seem to suggest that stereotypes of many speakers are not particularly strongly held. This finding lends support to the suggestion put forward in section 5.2.4, where the discussion raised the possibility that modern speakers of northern varieties may no longer elicit traditional consensual social stereotypes, at least as far as younger listeners are concerned. The results seem to contradict the findings mentioned in section 3.2.2 where, in a Danish context, even the merest trace of traditional varieties was sufficient to elicit negative evaluations (Kristiansen 1999).

This section has sought to use the stereotype content model as a framework for analysis of free-chosen open response data, using frequencies of positive and negative impressions as a 'score' to indicate the direction of responses along each dimension. However, the coding method did not distinguish between *degrees* of positivity and negativity expressed in each comment. Moreover, during the process of coding each individual word along the 'big two' dimensions, several semantic topics emerged, which are worthy of further consideration. In order to look more closely at the important concepts informing impressions of speakers, and the strength of feeling expressed in word choices, the next section looks more closely at the lexical repertoires used in responses to speakers.

6.2. **Thematic analysis of impressions**

Whereas in section 6.1, the keyword data was coded top-down in relation to the 'big two' dimensions of personal perception and for positive or negative weighting, the remainder of the chapter focuses on the semantic and latent meanings of the words chosen by listeners to express their impressions of speakers. The chief advantage of the keyword data over a forced-choice response to a trait descriptor, is that it allows listeners to express nuanced meaning through free-chosen expressions. A total of 746 different words were recorded, 367 of which occurred only once. Rather than attempt to analyse each of these individually, three forms of data reduction were employed in order to discern useful foci for attention.

- The most frequently occurring words were considered to represent salient concepts readily available in the repertoire of respondents to express impressions of speakers.
- Words which occurred more frequently in relation to specific speakers were identified using a keyword list tool.
- Thematic coding of the word-associations was also used to collate semantically similar concepts.

Throughout the analyses, a balance was sought between identifying broad patterns across the speaker responses and recognition of the particular insights offered by specific lexical choices. In order to address RQ2 (ii), inferential analysis interprets themes as pointers to ideological structures influencing responses to varieties of speech. Further, in order to address RQ2 (iii), strategies for distancing from and connecting to speakers are explored.

6.2.1. Results of the most frequently occurring keywords

These most frequently occurring words in the wordlist data as a whole give some indication of the concepts participants found particularly important in forming impressions of the speakers. Hence, some researchers have used a keyword elicitation task during pilot studies, in order to identify salient community-specific traits when constructing semantic differential scales (e.g., McKenzie 2010). Despite the fact that the present dataset comprised 746 different words, certain lexical items were particularly frequently occurring, and thus merited attention in addition to thematic coding of the entire word-list. The word-cloud in Figure 6-7 is a visual representation of the words used in responses, which shows the relative frequency of words at-a-glance.

Figure 6-7 Word-cloud showing the most frequently occurring keywords

The words ‘boring’ and ‘friendly’ dominate responses to speakers, and accordingly may be taken to represent particularly salient concepts. Both of these terms seem to be unambiguous in directionality, with boring interpreted as negative and friendly as positive, and relate to the social attractiveness dimension, perhaps as a reflection of the primacy of

this dimension in impression formation (Fiske et al 2002). It is worth mentioning that other frequently occurring descriptors, listed in Table 6.3, may not lend themselves as reliably to scale measurement.

Table 6.3 Frequencies of the ten most frequently occurring words, ranked according to frequency

Ranking	**Word**	**Frequency**
1	boring	209
2	friendly	169
3	confident	100
4	clear	84
5	not	80
6	bored	77
7	posh	69
8	quiet	64
9	monotone	62
10	dull	58

High scoring against a trait descriptor is usually interpreted as a positive response, which does not allow for expressions of excess. The third most frequently occurring word, 'confident' illustrates this point. 'Confidence' usually relates to the status dimension, with high scoring interpreted as positive rating. However, the keywords allow listeners to express perceived over-confidence, as the whole list includes nine occurrences of the word 'arrogant' indicating a negative response. Similarly, moderate degrees of 'quiet' could be considered positive in evaluations.

The word 'not', although unsuitable for use as an adjectival trait-descriptor in a semantic differential scale, is nonetheless interesting. There is seemingly a tendency amongst the young people to form impressions of speakers in terms of absence of attributes, rather than in terms of characteristics they are perceived to possess.

The most frequently occurring words are understood to represent particularly important concepts for the participant group. The distribution of these words between speakers was investigated in order to reveal differences in perceptions of the speakers.

Table 6.4 Comparison of frequencies of the most frequently occurring words showing distribution between speakers.

WORD	SPEAKER								
	NCLW	LDS	LIV	LON	MAN	MID	NCLE	SHE	SUN
Boring	36	19	6	20	44	33	3	22	26
Friendly	27	27	26	12	7	9	36	12	11
Confident	11	22	8	7	3	4	35	2	8
Clear	5	8	6	16	7	4	15	10	13
Bored	9	7	1	2	19	15	2	5	17
Posh	0	1	0	64	0	0	0	1	3
Quiet	3	1	11	1	14	3	2	20	9
Monotone	14	3	3	2	21	10	0	6	3
Dull	19	4	1	2	10	10	4	5	3

The frequency distribution chart shows some clear preferences can be discerned. NCLE and LIV are not perceived as 'boring' which demonstrates a more positive response to these speakers. This finding is similar to the results reported by Garrett (2010, p 220) in a study of Welsh teenagers, where the most popular speaker, from Cardiff attracted few mentions of the word 'boring'. Garrett considered that factors other than regional dialect were influencing evaluations, which seems also to be the case in the present keyword data, as the two Newcastle speakers notably received very different proportions of 'boring' comments. There is some congruence in occurrences of the semantically similar words 'boring', 'monotone' and 'dull', which all occur more frequently in responses to MAN, MID, and NCLW. Additionally, MAN and MID are the least likely to be perceived as 'friendly', further suggesting a negative response to these speakers, borne out by the findings of the evaluations reported in chapter 5. Most remarkable, however, is the distribution of the word 'posh'. Of 69 occurrences of this word, 64 appear in response to LON. Interestingly however, few obvious antonyms of posh are found among the whole keyword list, suggesting that the trait is less pertinent in relation to most speakers.

6.2.2. Results of the analysis using the keyword list tool

Section 6.2.1 demonstrated that some lexical items are more relevant to specific speakers. In order to investigate further which concepts were particularly pertinent in responses to

each speaker, the wordlists were analysed using the keyword list tool in AntConc concordancing software. This software is intended for use in corpus linguistics, but has been adopted for use in the present study for one specific purpose, i.e. to aid identification of any words that occur in each wordlist with unusual frequency.

The keywords identified for each speaker are presented in the order in which the speaker occurred in the data collection task, and are each considered in turn, with attention to both positivity and negativity in evaluative judgements and 'aboutness' (Phillips 1985), by which I mean simply the subject or semantic topics indicated by the keywords related to the speaker. Keywords analysis can give an indication of important topics within larger texts, i.e., what the text is about. In a similar vein, in the present study, keyword analysis is used to show what topics, if any, dominate impressions of each speaker.

Table 6.5 Impression terms given in response to NCLW, ranked by keyness

Rank	Frequency	Keyness		Effect	Keyword
1	19	+	13.21	184.9795	dull
2	6	+	11.99	769.9374	young
3	7	+	10.21	453.5965	independent
4	10	+	9.57	262.4739	Geordie
5	10	+	9.1	247.9749	northern

The five keywords identified in responses to NCLW accounted for 52 tokens. The highest-ranking keyword, 'dull', also has a high frequency. This keyword is not used exclusively to refer to NCLW; indeed hits are recorded in a search for the word 'dull' in the responses to all of the other speakers (LDS 4, LIV 1, LON 2, MAN 10, MID 10, NCLE 4, SHE 5 and SUN 3). Nevertheless, the high keyness value gives evidence that other speakers are significantly less likely to be perceived as 'dull' than NCLW. Despite the contextual considerations mentioned in section 6.3, dull invariably suggests a negative interpretation. It could reference either a judgement of task-performance competence, or an evaluation of personality more generally.

The second keyword, 'young', implies a contrast with relative age, so it is worth considering what different reference groups could be involved in arriving at this impression. The listener group themselves may be the referent, identifying themselves as young and the speaker as therefore being similar to themselves in this respect. (The speaker

is in fact 20 years old, the listeners 17). Alternatively, the speaker may have been judged younger than the usual age of visiting speakers to the school. 'Young' is factually neutral, but with a generally positive connotation.

The third keyword, 'independent' is a seemingly positive character judgement, possibly relating to the topic of the speech, which was living accommodation. Living alone may have appeared to be a particularly attractive and independent idea to older teenagers who are still living in their parental homes.

The other two keywords, 'Geordie' and 'northern' both correctly identify the speaker with a place or variety of speech. Where listeners offer terms that identify a local variety of speech, they are more likely to be key, as they are only relevant to specific speakers (in this instance the two Geordie speakers out of a total number of nine speakers). It must be remembered that the keyness of this word does not mean that 'Geordie' was one of the most frequent responses to this speaker, but it was more frequently attributed to this speaker in particular. (It is interesting to note that there is a fairly high frequency of the word, and to note also for subsequent speakers that this local identification is not always as important.) The keyness of the term 'northern', however, is interesting, indicating *perceptual distinctiveness* of northerness despite eight out of the nine speakers being northern.

Overall, the keywords indicate a mixture of positive and negative impressions of the speaker. The impressions that are particularly pertinent in responses to this speaker are about how uninteresting the speaker is, the level of maturity of the speaker and local or regional identity of the speaker

Table 6.6 Impression terms given in response to LDS, ranked by keyness

Rank	Frequency	Keyness		Effect	Keyword
1	11	+	14.29	382.4947	Yorkshire
2	8	+	7.35	250.9053	annoying
3	22	+	6.97	92.9979	confident

The three keywords given in response to LDS accounted for 41 tokens. The highest-ranking keyword 'Yorkshire' correctly identifies the regional provenance of the speaker, and is interpreted as being affectively neutral. The negative keyword 'annoying' reflects the feelings of the listener in reaction to the speaker, suggesting intensity in the negative response. The final keyword, 'confident' which in the context of the scenario would seem

to be a positive quality, has a much higher frequency, but has lower keyness strength than the other terms as it is not exclusively used in response to this speaker. The keywords suggest a mixture of positive and negative responses to the speaker. The key impressions are about regional identity, affective reaction, and evaluation of performance competence.

Table 6.7 Impression terms given in response to LIV, ranked by keyness

Rank	Frequency	Keyness		Effect	Keyword
1	24	+	27.77	317.0475	fast
2	11	+	23.74	855.7339	scouse
3	12	+	11.98	269.9615	quick
4	9	+	10.58	330.0803	understand
5	4	+	8.59	855.7339	Liverpool
6	7	+	6.99	271.6743	kind

The six keywords identified in response to LIV accounted for 67 tokens. The highest-ranking keyword ‘fast’ is closely related to ‘quick’, and can be interpreted as somewhat negative, in relation to the performance of the speech. The meaning of this word in context is highly unlikely to refer to the athletic prowess of the speaker, although physical characteristics were attributed to speakers in some instances.

The second keyword correctly identifies the identity of the speaker’s variety of speech as ‘Scouse’, with similar frequency to the identification of ‘Yorkshire’ and ‘Geordie’ in responses to the previous two speakers. The fifth keyword, ‘Liverpool’ also identifies the regional provenance of the speaker. Taken together, these references to place provenance suggest that the speech is noticed as being conspicuously different from the listener’s local variety.

The word ‘understand’ occurs in phrases such as ’hard to understand’ and again relates to the interactional acceptability of the speech performance.

The fifth keyword ‘kind’ is the only keyword in response to this speaker referencing a personality trait and is interpreted as a positive attribute along the social attractiveness dimension.

The key impressions of this speaker are about the pace of delivery of the speech, place provenance, intelligibility and demeanours.

Table 6.8 Impression terms given in response to LON ranked by keyness

Rank	Frequency	Keyness		Effect	Keyword
1	64	+	128.14	708.5865	posh
2	8	+	16.03	771.7573	stuck
3	8	+	14.92	674.8954	up
4	14	+	14.29	281.3938	intelligent
5	6	+	12.01	771.7573	pretentious
6	7	+	11.93	578.0335	arrogant
7	5	+	10	771.7573	formal
8	5	+	7.19	444.8483	southern

The eight keywords identified in response to LON accounted for 117 tokens.

The word ‘posh’ is a high frequency word and almost exclusively used in response to this speaker, resulting in a particularly high keyness strength. It is unique among all of the keywords in specifically referencing social class. ‘Posh’ can be used to express admiration or can be used pejoratively (Garrett et al 2003). This word distinguishes responses to LON from all other speakers.

‘Stuck’ and ‘up’ are counted separately but occur as collocates of each other in the wordlist and so are combined as a single impression term. (‘Up’ has slightly lower keyness because it also appears as part of the term ‘he’s just woke up’ in response to MID). Despite being available for use in their evaluative repertoire, the term was exclusively used to distance from this specific speaker. ’Stuck up’ is a negative term, which imputes an outlook or stance to the speaker. Similarly, ‘pretentious’ and ‘arrogant’ also *ascribe perspective* to LON, highlighting distance from this speaker.

The keyword ‘intelligent’, which is a competency evaluation with particular situational significance in the educational setting of the data collection exercise, should almost certainly be interpreted as a positive attribute.

‘Formal’ could describe characteristics of the speech performance or the manners of the person, and although evaluatively neutral in the context, does have a distancing effect. It

should be borne in mind that all speakers read identical questions and answered relatively informally, for the intended audience. (Transcripts can be seen in the appendices).

'Southern' correctly identifies the speaker's geographical provenance, and as no other speaker was southern, is understandably key. It is somewhat surprising that fewer listeners commented that the speaker was conspicuously southern than had noticed the speaker was northern in the case of the first speaker, NCLW.

The key impressions of this speaker are about social class, aloof demeanour, ability, and place provenance.

Table 6.9 Impression terms given in response to MAN ranked by keyness

Rank	Frequency	Keyness		Effect	Keyword
1	21	+	14.92	189.222	monotone
2	19	+	12.78	179.7237	slow
3	44	+	11.72	79.767	boring
4	14	+	7.68	149.0523	tired
5	19	+	7.43	110.701	bored

The five keywords identified in response to MAN accounted for 117 tokens. The highest-ranking keyword, 'monotone' gives a negative judgement of the speech performance. The second keyword 'slow' also relates to the speech performance, but could be interpreted as positive, as in the collocates 'slow and steady'. 'Boring' is a frequently used negative impression term across the dataset, but the keyness strength means it is more than usually pertinent in response to MAN. This term describes the speaker in terms of the listeners' *affective reaction* and could relate to either the speech performance or the speaker's personality. The other two keywords, 'tired' and 'bored' differ in that they *ascribe perspective* to the speaker. These terms are negative, but there is perhaps an element of sympathy with the speaker rather than blame, as the listeners are also bored. It is notable that reference to place is not key for this speaker.

The key impressions of this speaker are about pace of delivery and tedium.

Table 6.10 Impression terms given in response to MID ranked by keyness

Rank	Frequency	Keyness		Effect	Keyword
1	17	+	13.02	204.9199	tired
2	13	+	11.47	239.1623	unsure

The two keywords identified in response to MID accounted for 30 tokens. Both of the keywords *ascribe perspective* to the speaker, interpreting the speaker's feelings. The term 'tired' (as previously mentioned with respect to MAN) suggests commiseration with the speaker alongside a negative impression of speech performance. It is notable that fewer of the terms used in response to MID had a statistically significant keyness value, suggesting that the impression participants formed of this speaker was less distinctively different from impressions formed of the speakers in general. Again, reference to place is not key.

The key impressions of this speaker suggest weakness.

Table 6.11 Impression terms given in response to NCLE ranked by keyness

Rank	Frequency	Keyness		Effect	Keyword
1	24	+	32.64	402.9319	loud
2	35	+	26.82	200.7113	confident
3	13	+	16.29	365.3866	enthusiastic
4	13	+	13.91	298.9028	happy
5	36	+	10	83.0196	friendly
6	9	+	7.38	222.1907	Geordie

The seven keywords identified in response to NCLE accounted for 130 tokens. The first keyword, 'loud' is quite positive in the context of the speech performance but can also refer to the personal characteristic of being a 'loud' person. The terms 'confident' and 'enthusiastic' less ambiguously reference a personality trait, with a positive evaluation. 'Happy and 'friendly' are the most overtly positive personality trait references to appear in the keyword lists. Reference to local identity is also key, with similar frequencies of the term 'Geordie' in responses to both of the Newcastle speakers, (NCLE 9 tokens and NCLW 10 tokens.

The key impressions of this speaker are about extrovert personality, optimism, sociability, and local place provenance.

Table 6.12 Impression terms given in response to SHE ranked by keyness

Rank	Frequency	Keyness		Effect	Keyword
1	20	+	16.3	212.2752	quiet
2	5	+	11.11	899.2806	small
3	8	+	10.95	399.6403	shy

The three keywords identified in response to SHE accounted for 33 tokens. The first of these, ‘quiet’ can, as we have seen in the case of ‘loud’ reference either a performance description or a personality trait. In the former case, in the context of the task, quietness probably suggests a negative evaluation, although it may be considered attractive as a personal characteristic. ‘Small’ is alone in the keywords in signifying physical characteristics of the speaker, again suggesting limitation. The keyword ‘shy’ references a personality trait which, although not inherently negative, suggests a lack of power. Place provenance is not key in response to this speaker.

The keywords in response to this speaker are about diminution: reduced volume, reduced stature, and reduced confidence.

Table 6.13 Impression terms given in response to SUN ranked by keyness

Rank	Frequency	Keyness		Effect	Keyword
1	17	+	7.2	116.4675	bored
2	13	+	7.06	145.1176	to
3	5	+	6.68	390.2353	point

The three keywords identified in response to SUN accounted for 35 tokens.

The term with the highest keyness strength, ‘bored’ imputes motivation (or lack thereof) to the speaker. This term also appeared on the keyword list of MAN. In this case however, there are no other terms relating to tedium. The term ‘to the point’ references appropriateness in the performance of the speech and is ambiguous in direction. It could be a very positive attribute in a speaker to be direct, but on the other hand could imply a lack of interest in elaborating with further detail.

The keywords in response to this speaker are about tedium and directness.

6.2.2.1. ***Differences in keyness strength***

Although every keyword discussed above was found to be statistically significant, differences in the numbers of keywords generated by the software, and differences in keyness strength suggest that some speakers are more perceptually distinctive than others. Additionally, greater numbers of keywords were found in responses to LON and NCLE, suggesting that their ways of speaking were the most conspicuously distinctive. The keyness strength for the word 'posh' is by far the highest at 128.14., meaning that LON is especially notable for his presumed social class. NCLE is also relatively notable for his extrovert characteristics and LIV for his fast speech rate. As LIV's speech rate was perceived as being distinctively fast, it must be considered how far this is accounted for by the fact that LIV's speech rate was actually the fastest of all the speakers.

6.2.2.2. ***Discussion of results of the analysis using the keyword list tool***

The above discussion in terms of 'aboutness' identifies thematic topics of importance to listeners in forming impressions of speakers. Many of these describe characteristics of the speaker's personality (e.g., warmth, sociability, or dullness). Another broad category describes aspects of the speaker performance related to competence. Thus, semantic themes reflect importance of the 'big two' dimensions of status and social attractiveness considered in previous discussion of evaluations of speakers.

The concept of *energy* distinguishes the most positive (NCLE) and negatively rated (MAN, MID) speakers, and seems to be important in determining preferences for speakers. However, although as seen in Figure 6.6, SHE shares the all-good BIAS map profile with NCLE, key references for SHE do not signal an energetic character (quiet small shy). Speakers perceived to be loud and quiet are both preferred, but the speakers perceived to be disinterested (tired) are not. *Attributed perspective* is perhaps more important than levels of dynamism in distinguishing between speakers.

Apart from *appraisals* of possessed characteristics, the keyword list also revealed examples of two types of comment describing performed outlooks, both those of listeners and those imputed to speakers. Keywords referencing listeners' *affective reactions* (e.g., annoying, boring), distance from or connect to speakers in terms of listeners responses. On the other

hand, *attributed perspectives* construct a relationship with the speaker by making assumptions about the speaker's stance in relation to the listener (e.g. stuck-up). Both of these keyword types draw attention to impression formation as an interaction, albeit not face to-face.

6.2.3. Results of content analysis of themes in the impressions of speakers

Following the procedure employed in Garrett et al. (2006). The keyword questionnaire data were analysed using content analysis. Firstly, the semantic meanings of all keywords were identified. Each impression term is regarded as a shorthand reference to the concepts important to the listener associated with the speech performance. Secondly each word given in response to a speaker was collated with other semantically linked words to form topic groupings, where codes were deemed to be 'about' similar concepts. These initial topics were then aggregated into broad categories. The number of words appearing in each of the categories was then worked out as a percentage of the total. As previously seen in Table 6.1, participants did not supply equal numbers of keywords in response to each speaker. Therefore, to show proportional coverage, each theme is reported as a percentage of individual speaker totals.

The aggregation of topics resulted in seven broad categories that were applicable to all speakers. In order to give an overview of the concepts included in the keyword dataset, topics and broad categories are presented in Figure 6-8.

Broad category	**Sub-groupings of semantic topics aggregated together to form the broad category, with example lexical items**
Demographic information	Includes gender or age references. E.g. *male, lad, man*
Place provenance	Includes reference to locality, region, specific comments on accent and misidentifications. E.g.*Northern, strong accent*
Voice performance	Includes comments about tone pitch fluency, formality, clarity, volume, pace and intelligibility. E.g. *monotone, rushed, understandable*
Speech content	Including references to knowledge, level of detail, and any content related items. E.g. *short answers, repetitive, informative*
Character	By far the largest group of responses referenced character traits. Including references to sociability, politeness, contentment, and energy. E.g. *friendly, helpful, happy, enthusiastic, confident*
Emotional response	A subgroup of character traits. Characteristics are described in terms of the affective response provoked in the listener. E.g. *boring, likeable, annoying*
Social judgements	Includes references to intelligence, social class, wealth and normality E.g. *posh, smart, clever, dumb, normal.*

Figure 6-8 Description of broad categories and subgroupings of comments identified in keywords recording impressions of speakers

Coding into topics is not a straightforward process. Careful consideration was made when deciding in which category to place each of the impression terms, for two main reasons. Firstly, as revealed by the coding processes detailed in section 6.1, there is a danger of over-

fitting keyword data into categories. A second consideration is that the coding process relies upon the judgement of the researcher in interpreting the meaning of keywords and is necessarily subjective. To illustrate this process, below I outline how the initial topic groupings were aggregated to form a broad category of 'voice performance'.

Both 'monotone' and 'different tones,' whilst contradictory, refer to tone. Likewise, 'clear', clear voice,' 'not clear' and 'not too clear' refer to clarity. Both of these were interpreted as belonging to a broad category of 'voice performance'. Although in the majority of cases, semantically similar words could be grouped together with confidence, many words carry more than one meaning. For instance, the word 'monotone' had been grouped together with 'dull' in a topic categorised as 'dullness'. However, once the category of 'voice performance' was established, 'monotone' became part of a topic related specifically to tone, whilst 'dull' was excluded and re-grouped to belong with 'boring'. At a later sifting, 'boring' was also fitted into a new coding with other affective responses, whilst 'dull' remained with other keywords semantically linked to enthusiasm in the category 'energy'.

As an initial overview, the relative pertinence of the categories in perceptions of each of the speakers was considered. Table 6.14 provides a descriptive quantitative comparison of the seven broad categories, where the proportion of keyword usages in each category are presented as percentages of the keywords given in response to each speaker.

Table 6.14 Proportions of total comments for each speaker in each of the broad categories (percentages are rounded up or down to the nearest whole)

	speaker								
Category	NCLW	LDS	LIV	LON	MAN	MID	NCLE	SHE	SUN
Keywords	n=392	n=354	n=333	n=373	n=364	n=350	n=374	n=323	n=309
Demographic information	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Place provenance	9%	7%	8%	4%	4%	5%	4.%	4%	3%
Voice performance	18%.	17%	30%	15%	24%	25%	20%	22%	23%
Speech content	6%	9%	9%	9%	6%	6%	8%	13%	12%
Character	43%	48%	40%	34%	51%	39%	54%	40%	37%
Emotional response	11%	10%	4%	9%	10%	15%	7%	9%	11%
Social judgements	9%	6%	8%	**29%**	4 %	9%	6%	10%	9%

Generally, across speakers, a similar proportion of responses fall into each category. The frequencies of responses suggest that despite the differences found in section 6.1 in evaluations between the speakers, the concepts informing such judgements appear to be consistent. At this broad level of categorisation, it seems likely that results are task-dependent. As participants were asked to jot down impressions of the speaker, consequently the majority of responses for all speakers, identify character traits. Also, the context, which presented the task as a speaker selection exercise, probably caused elements of speech performance to be uppermost in the minds of listeners. Demographic information received comparatively little comment. Overall, the distribution of categories gives little indication of perceived differences between speakers, with the exception of LON. Social judgements are notably more predominant in response to LON than to other speakers.

The following section discusses each category in more detail.

6.2.3.1. ***Character traits, emotional response and social judgements***

As demonstrated in Table 6.14, the most frequently occurring category related to the perceived character of the speaker. This section included a wide variety of lexical items. The keywords belonging to this category indicate sociability (e.g., friendly, sociable, nice, reserved), politeness (e.g., helpful, blunt, honest, reliable), contentment (e.g., calm, positive, stressed), energy (e.g., enthusiastic, tired, bored, uninterested) and confidence (e.g., confident, uncertain). A few keywords commenting on physical traits or resemblance were included in this section (e.g., Jon Snow, strong), as were one or two miscellaneous words which were difficult to place (e.g., odd, hungover).

Responses to each speaker in each of the subdivided categories, are outlined in Table 6.15 below.

Table 6.15 Frequencies of comments for each speaker in each of the *character* sub-categories

				speaker					
Category	NCLW	LDS	LIV	LON	MAN	MID	NCLE	SHE	SUN
Keywords	n=392	n=354	n=333	n=373	n=364	n=350	n=374	n=323	n=309
sociability	40	48	45	23	16	21	**57**	27	15
politeness	17	19	22	**60**	13	12	25	24	20
contentment	26	24	19	12	38	32	35	22	16
energy	**57**	32	22	22	**88**	14	45	27	45
confidence	26	38	17	9	16	27	38	24	19
resemblance	-	6	-	-	2	3	-	8	3
misc	-	2	1	-	2	1	-	-	1

The politeness subcategory seems to be particularly pertinent in impressions of LON, energy in impressions of MAN and impressions of sociability distinguish NCLE. As previously found, NCLE and MAN were the most favoured and disfavoured speakers, and LON was perceived differently from all other speakers. Hence these categories merit

further attention, in order to give clearer insight into how the listeners positioned themselves in relation to the speakers

Politeness impressions of LON

Within the 'politeness' subcategory (including concepts relating to manners cleanliness and demeanour), LON is 'rude', 'blunt' and 'arrogant', but also 'nice', 'polite' and 'sweet', signifying polarised impressions of the speaker. As seen in the keywords analysis, however, words in this category which distinguished LON from other speakers (posh, stuck-up, pretentious, arrogant) served to outgroup the speaker in accordance with the envy stereotype in the stereotype content model. Other instances in the category, such as 'snobby', 'patronising' and 'judgemental' terms indicate intensity as well as directionality in negative responses. Moreover, they also *ascribe perspective* to the speaker, most clearly exemplified by the keyword 'like he hates poor people'. This comment unequivocally identifies the speaker with an elite outgroup, of wealthy individuals, although there is no information in the recording to support this assumption. Whilst this comment was placed in the 'politeness' category because it references interactive behaviour, it also clearly refers to social judgement, which as seen above, is much more prevalent among the keywords offered in response to LON. The implied division in society between 'poor people' and unsympathetic people with SSBE voices, is represented as a conflict.

Energy impressions of MAN

Of the 88 responses in this category, which includes mentions of enthusiasm, tiredness and boredom, all but one are negative, giving an overwhelming impression of a speaker who is perceived to be disengaged. Listeners *ascribe perspective* to MAN with a diverse lexical repertoire. Some are agreed among several listeners (e.g., bored, dull, unenthusiastic uninterested), but singular comments are also revealing of the outgroup identity constructed for this speaker (e.g., past caring, doesn't want to be here). Two particularly intense evaluative *appraisals* of this speaker (semi-conscious, dead) function to unequivocally distance him from the listener and outgroup him into the scorn quadrant of the SCM. Similarly, intense word associations are found in the 'contentment 'category (e.g., hates life, morose, depressed, stressed, pessimistic). Although this speaker receives some favourable comments relating to sociability and politeness (e.g., friendly, kind, honest), his perceived lack of energy appears to be of the greatest pertinence.

Sociability impressions of NCLE

The association 'friendly' accounts for 36 of the 57 keywords in the sociability category for NCLE, together with other keywords with positive connotations suggesting an extrovert personality (e.g., sociable, chatty, bubbly, fun, sounds like a laugh) Responses emphasise listener engagement (e.g., relatable, likeable) One participant declares 'I like speaker 7 lots'. He is also perceived to be relatively content (e.g., happy, cheerful, relaxed), and, in marked contrast to MAN, energetic (enthusiastic, energetic, lively), although in some responses, intensity suggested by lexical choices implies excess (boisterous, bullish, explosive).

Emotional responses

Emotional responses are a subdivision of character traits, with emphasis on the listener's affective response.

				speaker					
Category	NCLW	LDS	LIV	LON	MAN	MID	NCLE	SHE	SUN
Keywords	n=392	n=354	n=333	n=373	n=364	n=350	n=374	n=323	n=309
Relatable	3	2	5	6	2	4	**12**	2	4
interesting	4	7	6	2	5	4	8	6	4
annoying	-	8	5	3	2	0	4	1	1
Boring	37	19	7	22	24	34	3	22	27

Figure 6-9 Frequencies of comments for each speaker in each of the *emotional responses* sub-categories

By far the most frequently felt response to speakers was boredom, as previously discussed in relation to the most frequently occurring words. The other notable responses in this category are in responses to NCLE, who prompts positive feelings of relatability. (I like speaker 7 lots, engaging, relatable, approachable, likeable). This feeling of relatability distinguishes between the two Newcastle speakers, identifying NCLE as an ingroup member.

Social judgements

	speaker								
Category	**NCLW**	**LDS**	**LIV**	**LON**	**MAN**	**MID**	**NCLE**	**SHE**	**SUN**
Keywords	n=392	n=354	n=333	n=373	n=364	n=350	n=374	n=323	n=309
Class/ wealth	3	3	2	68	1	2	2	1	2
Intelligence/ accomplishment	12	6	10	30	5	5	7	9	5
values	6	9	10	2	4	8	5	10	14
normal	14	3	3	7	5	10	7	14	7

Figure 6-10 Frequencies of comments for each speaker in each of the *social judgements* sub-categories

The frequencies of keywords associating LON with social judgement distinguishes him from all other speakers. By far the most pertinent impression was ‘posh’, as previously discussed in the most frequently occurring words. Two other words relate to class (queen, upperclass, fancy). Only one word ’rich’ specifically references wealth. Class is otherwise a less pertinent category for listeners and does not seem to account for the differences between more highly regarded and less highly regarded speakers. For instance, the two comments for MID are contradictory (upperclass, common).

LON is also distinguished by more frequent references to intelligence or accomplishment. Fourteen responses describe him as ‘educated’. Of the other keywords, all but one are positive (educated, erudite, smart, clever, sophisticated, wise) with the exception being a single mention of ‘stupid’. Responses to other speakers in this sub-category are more mixed, for instance NCLW (smart, clever, a bit stupid, not very intelligent, thick, accomplished, experienced, less educated, uneducated).

The ‘normal’ category, which suggests ingrouping, includes all speakers. (NCLW, normal, plain, standard, regular: LDS, sounded the same, plain, standard, regular; LIV, normal; LON, average, normal, fine, ok, regular, medium, MAN, normal, standard; MID, normal, generic, standard,; NCLE, regular, normal, alright, ok; SHE, unique, standard, regular,

nothing special, normal, very similar to the last 8; SUN, normal, standard). Only one instance suggests that the speaker is not normal (SHE, unique). Notable in this sub-category is the 'normal' perception of LON, who has been perceived distinctively differently from other speakers in other measures. Also, a comment made in response to SHE directly draws comparison between all nine speakers, finding little to distinguish them.

6.2.3.2. ***Voice performance***

	speaker								
Category	**NCLW**	**LDS**	**LIV**	**LON**	**MAN**	**MID**	**NCLE**	**SHE**	**SUN**
Keywords	n=392	n=354	n=333	n=373	n=364	n=350	n=374	n=323	n=309
tone	**43**	3	4	4	23	14	2	7	8
clarity	7	6	12	16	8	8	14	13	19
volume	6	13	14	3	14	4	30	18	8
pace	15	24	**48**	14	23	22	18	12	19
fluency	7	2	4	7	6	9	3	4	14
formality	12	3	3	7	2	2	4	10	1
pitch	3	6	**14**	1	2	7	1	4	-
intelligibility	1	2	**12**	6	4	4	3	4	4

Figure 6-11 Frequencies of comments for each speaker in each of the *voice performance* sub-categories

As previously noted in the findings from the keywords list tool, responses in this category significantly single out LIV for the fast pace of his delivery (fast, fast spoken, fast speaking, fast talking, too fast, speaking too fast, quick, quite quick, too quick, v. quick, slow down, rushed, rushing, hurried, urgent, rapid). It is interesting to note in these responses that the adverb of degree 'too' suggests a taken-for-granted discourse of moderation v excess. The intensifying element is not context dependent, as the meaning of 'too' in 'too fast' would indicate more than is necessary or desirable, and would carry a negative connotation even if the context were different, that is to say, if the adverb too was modifying a different word. However, as an evaluation of a speaker, the broader social context determines the

perception of whether the speech rate is appropriate or not. The judgement 'too fast' may mean that the speaker is considered to be too fast to be easily intelligible for an audience in a school context, but this evaluation would not necessarily transfer to a different set of circumstances. For instance, the speech rate of the speaker may not be considered too fast to tell a joke amongst an audience of friends.

Also, particularly notable in this section is the pertinence of tone in responses to NCLW (monotone, same tone, bland, monotonous, monotonal, bland, sounded the same, intonation). Surprisingly, this was not highlighted by the keyword list tool, presumably due to the different words used to convey the same concept. The word 'monotone' appears 14 times in responses to NCLW, 21 times in responses to MAN and 11 in responses to MID. Responses in this category imply insufficient competence in the speaker performance. This impression of speakers may explain less favourable status responses towards these three speakers.

6.2.3.3. ***Speech content***

This category again largely relates to competency traits, as listeners made judgement on the detail, organisation, and knowledge.

				speaker					
Category	**NCLW**	**LDS**	**LIV**	**LON**	**MAN**	**MID**	**NCLE**	**SHE**	**SUN**
Keywords	n=392	n=354	n=333	n=373	n=364	n=350	n=374	n=323	n=309
knowledge	9	13	17	11	1	8	8	16	2
Complexity/ detail	9	14	6	6	15	2	15	19	22
Organisation	4	5	5	14	2	4	5	4	10
subject matter	1	1	2	3	3	2	2	2	1

Figure 6-12 Frequencies of comments for each speaker in each of the *speech content* sub-categories

Despite the common subject matter of straightforward questions about their own living accommodation, some speakers are more frequently deemed to be knowledgeable than others. Responses to LIV (knowledgeable, informed, informative, gives info, good info,

good tips useful) and SHE (informative, informed, knowledgeable, knows what he's talking about, aware of the situation, well experienced, good answers, similar answers) demonstrate perceptions of competence. Only one listener disagreed for each speaker (LIV, uninformed: SHE, pointless info).

Also of note is the lack of complexity and detail highlighted in responses to SUN (e.g., not much to say, short answers, simple) and MAN (e.g., brief, vague, short replies) as opposed to divided opinions about LDS (e.g., informative, not very informative, long detailed answers, too brief, descriptive, basic). Comments in this category are concerned with perceptions of expertise, appropriate levels of detail and competent organisation of material, relating to the status dimension.

6.2.3.4. ***Place provenance***

	speaker								
Category	**NCLW**	**LDS**	**LIV**	**LON**	**MAN**	**MID**	**NCLE**	**SHE**	**SUN**
Keywords	n=392	n=354	n=333	n=373	n=364	n=350	n=374	n=323	n=309
local	13	0	17	3	0	0	12	1	4
regional	15	16	2	4	1	6	3	5	2
accent	5	6	4	7	3	3	1	5	4
misidentification	0	4	2	0	7	6	0	2	0

Figure 6-13 Frequencies of comments for each speaker in each of the *place provenance* sub-categories

Listeners were not asked to identify the speakers' accent or hometown origin at this part of the task, but this information was supplied in responses to every speaker. With space allowed for only three keywords, it seems reasonable to suggest that the participants who offered guesses as to the speakers' regional voice variety must have felt that this was an important aspect of their impression of the speaker. Where references to place provenance are made, the majority are correct, but at different levels of specificity. Among the significant keywords, the two Geordie speakers and LIV received significantly more frequent mentions of their local voice. LDS is identified more broadly as 'Yorkshire', and

at the regional level, NCLW and LON are identified as ‘’northern’ and ‘southern’ respectively. Misidentifications suggest that some of the listeners do not have clear prototypes of speakers from the wider northern region.

The word associations reveal that an ‘English’ label is applied to LON. It is surprising to find this concept is conspicuous in a stimulus of native speakers, perhaps contrasted with NCLW who is identified as ‘non-English’. Whilst possibly a genuine misattribution, the comment may indicate a prescriptivist perspective. Some comments are more explicitly revealing of attitudes to variation in general. ‘Elocution’ is a suggestion offered to NCLW, although one response to NCLW specifically states ‘regional accent-not a bad thing’, MAN is ‘not pronouncing properly’ whereas SUN is a ‘well-spoken northerner’. Appreciation of accented speech is indicated by judgements that SHE and LDS both have a ‘nice accent’, MID has a ‘cool accent’. Contradictions are found in perceptions of the degree of accentedness. For instance, NCLW has a ‘strong dialect’ yet also a ‘slight accent’. Use of qualifiers suggests that there is a ‘Goldilocks principle’ guiding perceptions of conspicuity and categorisations of interactional acceptability (e.g., very, strong, slight, broad, light, not strong).

6.2.3.5. ***Demographic information***

	speaker								
Category	**NCLW**	**LDS**	**LIV**	**LON**	**MAN**	**MID**	**NCLE**	**SHE**	**SUN**
	n=392	n=354	n=333	n=373	n=364	n=350	n=374	n=323	n=309
gender	6	6	2	2	3	4	2	2	3
age	7	0	1	1	1	2	1	2	0

Figure 6-14 Frequencies of comments for each speaker in each of the *demographic information* sub-categories

Although the speech stimulus controlled for gender and age, both topics were mentioned in responses, sometimes using terms that referenced both. ‘Male’ and ‘man’ appeared in reference to every speaker. Besides gender, ‘man’ suggests a mature adult. Relative maturity was also implied by the word ‘manly’ in response to MAN and MID. More obviously referencing gender stereotypes, MID is described as ‘butch, whereas one listener

describes SUN as ‘feminine’. Contradictory references emphasised the youth of speakers. Age references were absent from the keywords offered for LDS and SUN. All other speakers were described as either ‘lad’ or ‘boy’. SHE was described as a ‘little boy’, while MAN ‘seems like a child’, carrying a more disparaging inference of immaturity. On the contrary, MID receives the comment ‘older in age’. The term ‘young adult’ used in response to NCLW perhaps functions to place the speaker in the listeners’ own demographic, as may the keyword ’young’ which is referenced 5 times and applies solely to this speaker.

The topic of maturity seems to be influential in these comments, which is in keeping with the context and participant cohort. In UK schools, student progression is coupled with year-groups, with each school year marking an identity transition. Moreover, as the age of majority is eighteen in England, notions of childhood and adulthood may be particularly important to the participant group of 17-18 year-olds. Therefore, to emphasise childishness is to place the speaker in a category which these young people, on the threshold of adulthood, are leaving behind. Although a small proportion of responses fall into this category, nevertheless the responses within it show how listeners connect with speakers by placing them in a category they themselves share, or distance from them either by interpreting the speaker to be older or younger.

6.2.3.6. ***Summary of emergent themes from the thematic analysis***

Emergent themes from the thematic analysis point towards prevalent discourses in the culture. Figure 6-15 shows a summarised overview of the inferences drawn from the word associations included in each of the semantic categories.

Semantic category	**Inferential representations of speakers**	**Orientations towards speakers**
Demographic information	Maturity v immaturity Respect v ridicule	Speaker is a lad, like one of us; inclusive. The speaker is manly. carries authority; aspirational. The speaker is childish and therefore trivial; dismissive.
Place provenance	Associating v dissociating Moderation v excess	Speaker is familiar, typical. Speaker's accent is an asset / a liability.
Voice performance	Competence v incompetence Appropriate v inappropriate Moderation v excess	Speaker can control performance effectively for the purpose. 'Goldilocks principle'; too little, too much or just right.
Speech content	Expertise v ignorance	Speaker has knowledge. Speaker has ability (to organise and control material).
Character **Appraisals** **Ascribed perspective**	Social attractiveness v repulsion Dynamism v dullness	Speaker is an attractive person. Speaker is an engaging person. Speaker is an engaged person.
Emotional response **Affective reaction**	Acceptance v rejection	Speaker causes listener's feelings.
Social judgement	Acceptance v rejection	Speaker is positioned with respect to societal norms.

Figure 6-15 Inferential representations of speakers emergent from analysis of categories

A discourse of moderation and excess is also suggested by the use of adverbs of degree. The intensifier 'too', which appears 33 times in the wordlist, most frequently in association with 'fast' or 'quick', is used to suggest more than is necessary or desirable. Instances of the intensifier 'very' were also associated with a variety of concepts from different semantic categories (e.g. helpful sociable, intelligent, educated, northern) Of the 30 instances of this

word, 12 implied insufficiency by negating the intensifier with the word ‘not’ ’ (e.g. not very confident’ ‘not very interested.’.

6.2.4. Discussion of thematic analysis of word associations

The theoretical stance taken in this research adopts the view that a speaker evaluation task involves the listeners in an interaction, in which they construct a position in relation to the speaker.

The purpose of this analysis was to capture some detail of the cultural images and resonances that inform perceptions of speakers. The impression terms generated by the keyword task included several instances of words which are familiar from the array of terms previously used in semantic differential scales. The present study follows Garrett et al (2003, 2004, 2005) in the belief that it is useful to analyse all of the resulting data as main data, rather than serving as a preliminary technique in the selection of traits to be used in preparation of semantic differential scales.

Three data reduction techniques were used to access the most important words. Nevertheless, single occurrences can also point to strongly held ideas, and can be revealing of stereotypes and their underpinning ideological perspectives, so less frequently occurring items are also of interest. Conventional associations are more statistically frequent, whereas more divergent and original thought is indicated by less statistically frequent items, and by more associations overall (Nemeth and Kwan 1985). It follows that the most frequently occurring items should be revealing of recognised stereotypes shared by the group, but the whole of the data may be of interest in exploring less established stereotypes.

The word associations were offered in a classroom situation, offering impressions of speakers in a status-focussed task. Hence, the findings might be expected to emphasise the status dimension. However, of all word-associations, ‘boring’ and ‘friendly’ were the most important impressions recorded, giving further evidence to support the theoretical view of the primacy of warmth in the ‘big two’ dimensions (Abele & Bruckmüller, 2011). However, this finding contrasts with the frequently chosen adjectives offered to McKenzie and Carrie (2018), by a comparable group of participants to those taking part in their Tyneside study. The selected trait-descriptors selected for their semantic-differential scale all emphasised status: correct, good, educated, clear, and high status, all of which appear

as concepts in the thematically coded word-associations offered by participants in the present study. However, even in the status-stressing context of the present study, social attractiveness appears to be more salient to the respondents when forming impressions of speakers. One reason for this difference may be that spontaneous and time-limited responses to actual examples of the attitude object (i.e., the speech varieties) may differ from responses to the conceptual label, 'northern speech'.

Although in previous study the word 'boring' was also found to be particularly prevalent among younger school children in Wales (Giles et al 2003) the broad semantic categories otherwise differed in the present study Nevertheless, in both studies, the important associations were seemingly task-related. The Welsh schoolchildren's comments related to the content of the stories they heard and to the performance of a storyteller, whereas in the present study, the comments about the speaker's performance produced sub-categories familiar from classroom exercises where students assess each other's performance in making presentations. Consequently, not all of the concepts found in previous thematic analyses were applicable during this analysis. For instance, taboo terms featured prominently in the keywords provided by participants in Wales (Garrett et al 2003) but were notable by their absence in the current responses. A possible reason for this is the difference in maturity between the younger adolescents in the earlier study and the older teenagers participating in the present study. It seems improbable that taboo words are more frequently used in Wales than in Newcastle, (although the lexical choices may vary) or that teenagers swear less frequently in 2018 than they did in 2003. The likeliest explanation attributes this difference to the relative formality of the context for present data collection. Whereas the Welsh participants were responding informally to entertaining stories, the Newcastle participants were asked to indicate their impression of a speaker in a volunteer job role and took this responsibility seriously.

Inferential themes were revealed during thematic coding of the keywords. These chiefly related to the two dimensions of status (maturity v immaturity respect v ridicule, competence v incompetence, appropriate v inappropriate, expertise v ignorance) and social attractiveness (associating v dissociating, acceptance v rejection, social attractiveness v repulsion, dynamism v dullness). Additionally, moderation v excess emerged as a latent theme. This theme is particularly interesting, as degrees of conspicuity could influence perceptions of acceptability in relation to tolerance of accented speech.

6.3. Summary

The results presented in this chapter were guided by RQ2, which sought information about the impressions formed of speakers and the lexical repertoires available and selected to express them.

All of the 3172 references were coded in relation to the fundamental 'big two' dimensions. Where responses did not clearly belong in either category a neutral response was coded. In addition, every reference was coded as a positive or negative evaluation, or neutral if such directionality could not be ascribed. Unlike the participants in prior study, the responses of the Newcastle participants were not characterised by negativity. Ingrouping and outgrouping of speakers was examined using the stereotype content model as an explanatory framework. NCLE was found to be the most favoured speaker, being positively evaluated along both dimensions, and MID and MAN were both found to be regarded negatively along both status and social attractiveness dimensions.

Although the analysis of keyword associations focussed on concepts shared by listeners, with the intention of interpreting inter-speaker differences, individual responses to each speaker varied. Many sub-categories included directly contradictory responses to individual speakers. The diversity of responses also suggested that the degree of heterogeneity in the group is of itself an interesting finding, given the restricted cohort of participants selected for the study, suggesting that stereotypes are less well established.

6.3.1. BIAS map profiles

- Participants had no difficulty in ascribing personality traits and competencies to speakers on the basis of 30 seconds of speech on a relatively neutral topic. Many of these keyword responses related to the 'big two' dimensions of the stereotype content model.
- The keyword responses show that one of the speakers, NCLE is favoured above all other speakers in terms of frequencies of positive and negative responses.

- Whilst NCLE speaker is recognised to be a local Geordie speaker, preference for him does not appear to be entirely contingent on that locality, as NCLW, the other local speaker is also recognised to be local, but is moderately disfavoured
- Reference to the stereotype content model suggests the most highly favoured and disfavoured speakers are stereotyped as all-good or all-bad, the 'halo and horns' effect.
- The moderately evaluated speakers were mapped onto all four of the possible stereotypes, but occupied a less determinate centre ground.
- Mapping of speakers on the BIAS map largely replicated findings from the evaluative scales reported in Chapter 5.

6.3.2. Thematic analysis

- The most frequently occurring words given in response to each speaker showed that 'boring' and 'friendly' were particularly pertinent associations, in keeping with the assumed primacy of warmth in person perception.
- The thematic analysis reveals seven topic categories are of importance in forming impressions of all speakers: demographic information, place provenance, voice performance, speech content, character, emotional response, social judgements.
- Distribution of the broad topics was comparable across speakers. LON was the exception, with comments in the 'social judgements' category more pertinent to impressions of this speaker.
- Word associations distinguished the SSBE speaker in two ways. Significantly different lexical items were used to describe the impression formed of LON than the rest of the speakers. Impressions of this speaker were also categorised differently than other speakers.
- Characteristics associated with energy were particularly important in forming impressions of speakers. However, *ascribed perspectives* were more important than dynamism.
- Responses to speakers could differ considerably between participants.
- During the processes of coding, three strategies emerged as ways in which impressions of speakers were constructed, namely *appraisal*, *affective reaction* and *ascribed perspective* Each operates to emphasise distance or nearness. *Appraisal* occurs where positive or negatively personality characteristics are identified.

Ascribed perspective can also be either positive or negative but can involve a degree of identification or empathy with the speaker as the speaker's intentions are imputed. *Affective reaction* activates a listener response to the speaker and involves a degree of interaction which also can have either positive or negative loading.

Chapter 7: **Results and discussion part 3: affiliation data.**

Overview

This chapter deals with RQ3, investigating what can be learned about language attitudes amongst young people from Newcastle, from directly elicited measures of individuals' affiliation both with local voice and with local place identities. The data used to address this question derived from visual analogue scales, which were designed as a means of reporting multiple identities in order to reveal whether participants claimed group membership at local or wider regional levels. Participants responded to conceptual labels of voice and of place identity by choosing where to draw a line on an unmarked cline between two opposing statements.

Structure of the current chapter

Firstly, section 7.1 will detail responses to two 'voice identity scales', revealing affiliation with conceptual labels representing local and wider regional speech communities. Secondly, section 7.2 will detail the responses to a 'place identity scale', revealing relative affiliations with conceptual labels of local place identities at five levels of locality.

7.1. **The voice affiliation scales**

In order to investigate claiming and denial of the local voice, a direct measure of local voice affiliation was included in the study design. Visual analogue scales were used to measure the degree to which participants claimed affiliation with the labels 'Geordie' or Northern' to describe their own speech. Each participant drew a line on an unmarked scale to indicate their level of agreement with the statements 'My voice is Geordie' and 'My voice is northern'. The scales were labelled at each end with the labels 'disagree' and 'agree'. Whilst voice' information includes features other than accent, I took the view that vocal identity information, such as deciding whether a person sounds Geordie, is determined by accent. Consequently, either term could be used in the question. The term 'voice' was preferred, as 'accent' can have perjorative connotations when people consider others as 'having an accent' (Lippi-green, 1997). Some participants may perceive that they do not have an accent at all, whereas it is highly unlikely that they would deny they possess a voice. Therefore, the term 'voice' was deemed more likely to elicit information about the

relevant degrees of locality in the voice identification scales, with less bias towards negative results.

To prepare the results for analysis, following Llamas and Watt (2014), the distance of each line from the 'disagree' point on the scale was measured to the nearest millimetre, giving a finely graded measure of agreement with the statements. These raw scores were then converted to percentage scores for ease of analysis. There are 15 missing values in the data, meaning that not all participants completed this task (N=138), due possibly to the placement of the affiliation question at the end of the data collection.

7.1.1. Means and frequencies of scoring on the two voice affiliation scales.

The first stage in describing the data was to establish levels of agreement and disagreement with each of the statements among the participant group as a whole. Every score below 50 is taken to indicate disagreement with the statement, and the scores above 50 are taken to indicate agreement with the statement. Two measures were used, i.e., means and frequencies, in order to determine whether the labels were claimed or denied. Mean scores showed whether the *total scoring* of all participants showed agreement or disagreement with the statements. As strongly held views from a minority can skew overall mean outcomes, frequencies were also examined, to find out whether a greater *proportion of the participants* agreed or disagreed with the voice affiliation statements.

The mean scores presented in Figure 7-1 compare levels of agreement with the statements 'My voice is Geordie', and 'My voice is northern'.

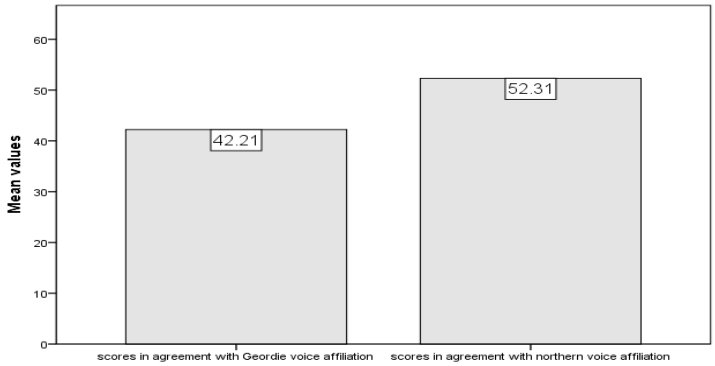

Figure 7-1 Bar chart showing mean scores in agreement with the statements ‘My voice is Geordie’ and ‘My voice is northern’

The mean score of 42.21% shows negative affiliation with the label ‘Geordie’ whereas the score of 52.31% shows positive affiliation with the label ‘northern’. In order to evaluate whether the preference in identity affiliation between the two voice affiliation labels was statistically significant, a paired samples t-test was conducted to compare scores of responses in agreement with the statement ‘My voice is Geordie’ with responses in agreement with the statement ‘My voice is northern’.

There was a significant difference in the scores in response to the ‘Geordie’ (*M*= 42.21, *SD*=33.26) and ‘Northern’ (*M*= 52.31, *SD*=28.40) statements; t (137) =-3.85, $p < .001$ (two-tailed). The mean difference in scores was 10.09 with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 4.90 to 15.28. The eta squared statistic .09 indicated a moderate effect size

These results suggest that there is a difference in affiliation with local voices when they are labelled at different levels of locality, i.e., labelled as ‘Geordie’ or as ‘northern’. Specifically, the results suggest that the participant group significantly preferred to claim affiliation with a wider regional ‘northern’ voice than with a local ‘Geordie’ voice.

Means and frequencies of scores produced congruent results. Frequencies of positive and negative responses to the statements, as given in Figure 7-2, also show a preference for northern voice label rather than the Geordie voice label. Fewer than half of the 138 participants who completed this part of the study gave positive responses to the statement ‘My voice is Geordie’, (n=53) whereas over half of participants gave positive responses to the statement ‘My voice is northern’ (n=76). Conversely, negative responses were more frequent in response to the ‘Geordie label (n=85) as compared to frequency of negative

responses to the northern label (n=62). For ease of interpretation, the proportion of participants responding negatively and positively to each label is converted to percentage terms in Figure 7-2.

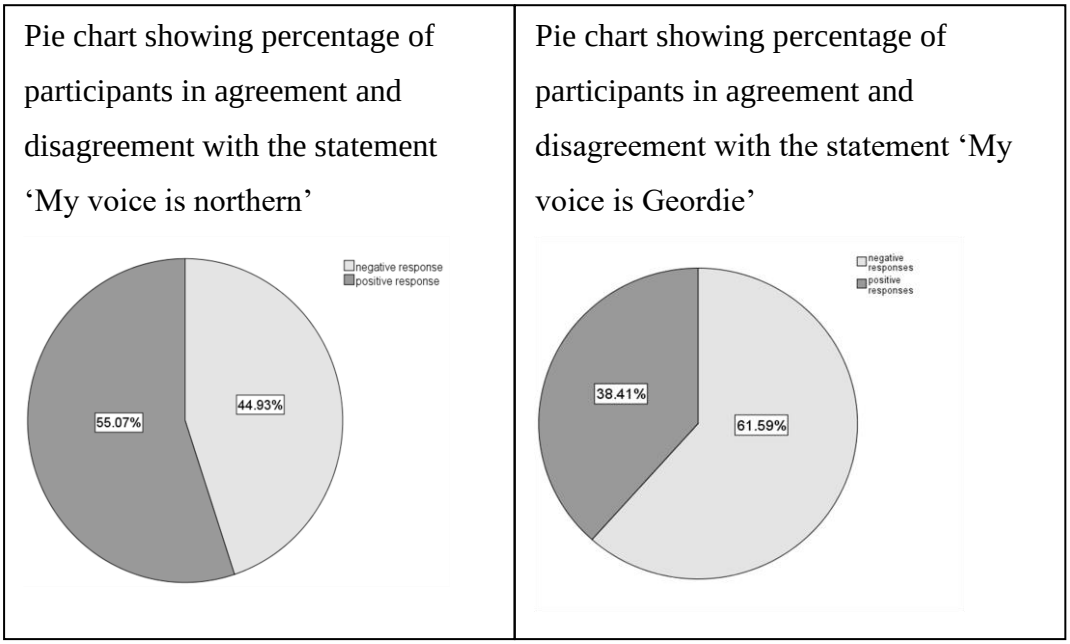

Figure 7-2 Pie charts showing percentage of participants giving positive or negative responses to the statements 'My voice is Geordie' and 'My voice is northern'(N=138)

Taking the participant group as a whole, the Geordie voice label is denied, whereas the northern voice label is claimed. This result indicates that young people in Newcastle orient towards a less localised speech community identity, suggesting support for the view put forward by (Watt 2002) that young people may affiliate with a more 'modern' identity associated with forms with wider currency. Nevertheless, standard deviation scores from the t-test suggest that the differences within the participant group may require closer examination, to provide a clearer picture of levels of agreement in the intensity as well as the direction of responses. In order to present the distribution of responses at-a-glance, the bar chart shown in Figure 7-3 show the percentage scores binned into increments of 10, with the frequencies of responses for each.

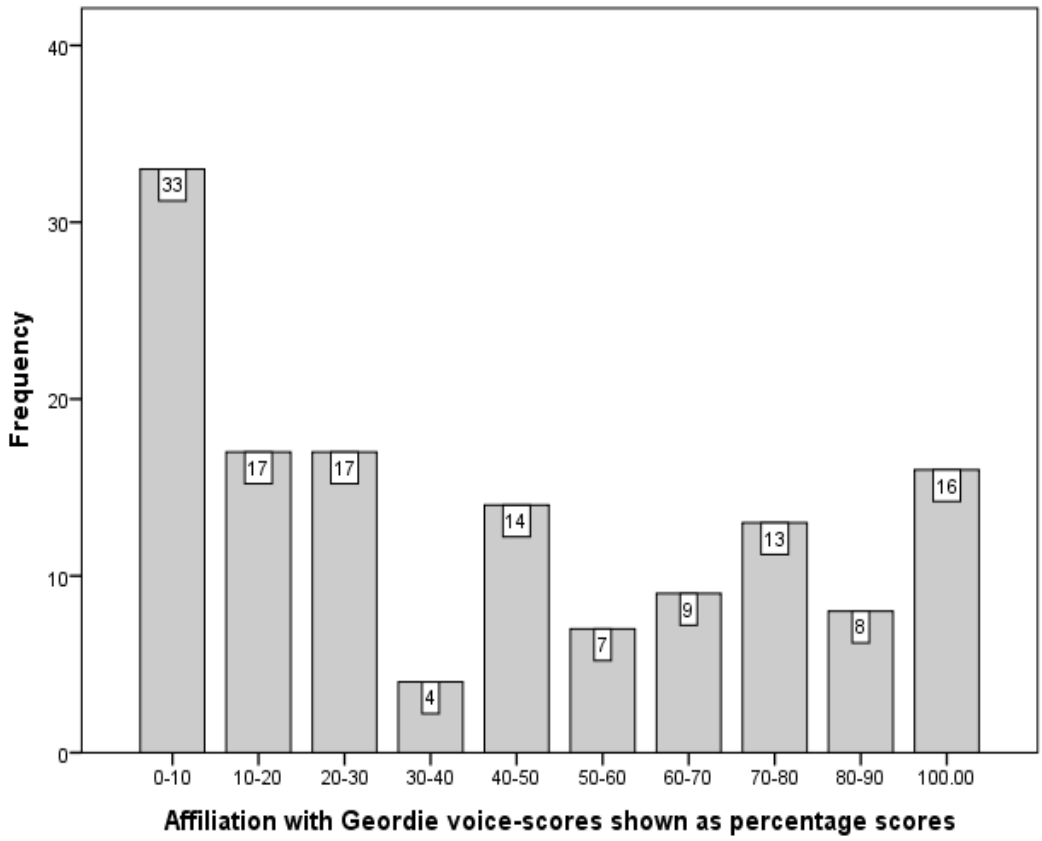

Figure 7-3 Frequencies of scores in response to the statement ‘My voice is Geordie’ (N=138)

The distribution of scores demonstrates full use of the scale. The participants did not avoid the extreme values (close to 0 or 100). The lowest scores possible scores, between 0-10% are by far the most frequently selected. 24% of the participants (n=33) gave the lowest scores in response to the statement, suggesting that for these participants, there is clear disavowal of the label ‘Geordie’ to describe their speech. There are almost twice as many responses in this score range than in any of the other nine score ranges. The scores demonstrate that not only is the Geordie voice denied by the majority of participants, but there is strength of feeling in the intensity of their rejection of the voice label. However, 12% of participants (n=16) also give the highest possible affiliation score to the label ‘Geordie’, indicating intense loyalty amongst a minority towards the ‘Geordie’ label.

In contrast, response to the ‘northern' label, affiliation ratings are more evenly distributed across the range of scores, as can be seen in Figure 7-4

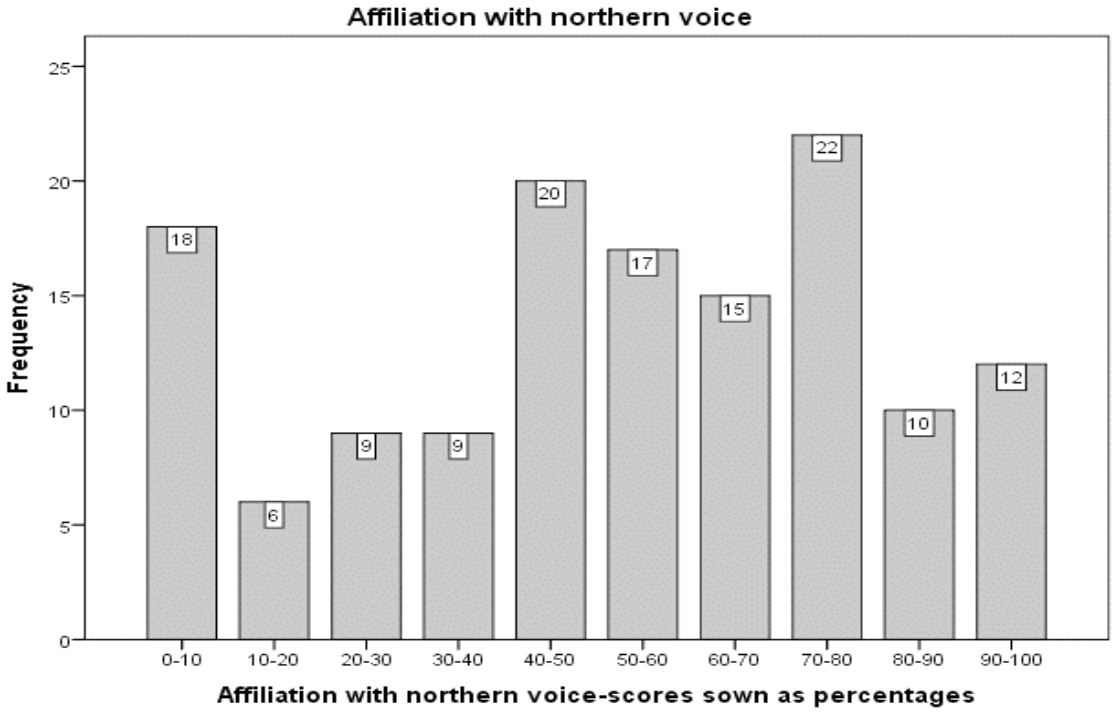

Figure 7-4 Frequencies of scores in response to the statement 'My voice is northern' (N=138)

The distribution of scores shows that responses to the 'northern' voice label are less polarised than responses to the 'Geordie' label. At both extremes of the scale, fewer participants recorded both the highest and the lowest scores. Scores in the highest band (90-100%) were recorded by 9% (n=12) compared with 12% (n=16) in response to the Geordie label. Likewise, the very lowest scores are also less frequently selected in response to this label: 13% of participants (n=18) disavowed the label by recording ratings in the lowest band (below 10%), compared with 24% (n=33) for the Geordie label. At least some of the participants who most strongly disavowed the Geordie label were less strongly opposed to the northern label to describe their speech. Although the most frequently occurring band is relatively high-scoring (70-80%), the scores in the mid-range are more frequently awarded for 'northern' than for 'Geordie', suggesting moderately positive affiliation with the voice label 'northern'.

Although the t-test revealed significant preference for the label 'northern' compared with the label 'Geordie', the distribution of scores suggests less intensity in these responses. Nevertheless, some participants strongly accept or reject both of the labels.

Ranges of scores do not identify whether those individuals who strongly disavow the 'Geordie' label are among the same individuals who disavowed the northern identity label. Likewise, those individuals that claim the Geordie voice label may not be the same individuals who claim a more general northern voice identity. The next step was to identify the extent to which the two identity labels were claimed or denied as a pair.

7.1.2. Relationships between the two voice label preferences

7.1.2.1. *Comparison of direction of affiliation*

In order to identify whether the two varieties of speech were claimed or denied as a pair, responses to each item were coded for the direction of response as either positive or negative for both statements . Responses to the speech affiliation statements could place the participant into one of four conditions: both Geordie and northern, neither Geordie nor northern, Geordie but not northern or northern but not Geordie.

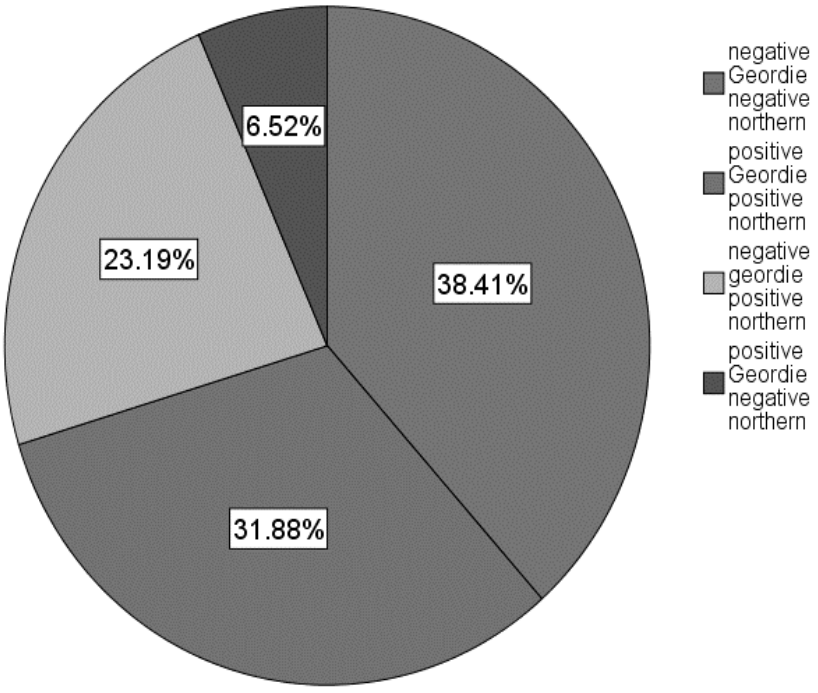

Figure 7-5 Percentage of participants affiliating positively with neither of the voice labels, both labels, 'northern' label only or 'Geordie' label only.

The groupings demonstrate that the majority of the participants claim or deny the two labels as a pair. 38.41% of participants responded to both of the voices using the negative half of

the scale, whilst 31.88% responded to both of the voice labels using the positive half of the scale. Geordie and northern voice labels would seem to be interrelated. Those denying both of the labels formed the largest of the four groups, but the majority of respondents (61.59%) responded positively to one or both of the labels. Of those who dissociated the two labels, more of the participants claimed only a northern voice (23.19%) than claimed only a Geordie voice (6.52%) For these latter participants, seemingly, the term 'northern' does not entail 'Geordie' speech.

7.1.2.2. ***Comparison of strength of affiliation***

The frequency bar charts (Figure 7.3 and Figure 7.4) have already shown that there is considerable strength of feeling in afiliation responses to both voice labels. It cannot be assumed however that the participants who *strongly* affiliate with a Geordie identity are the same participants who *strongly* affiliate with a northern identity. In order to examine the intensity of responses in relation to each other, a scatterplot was used to display how the scores were distributed in relationship to each other.

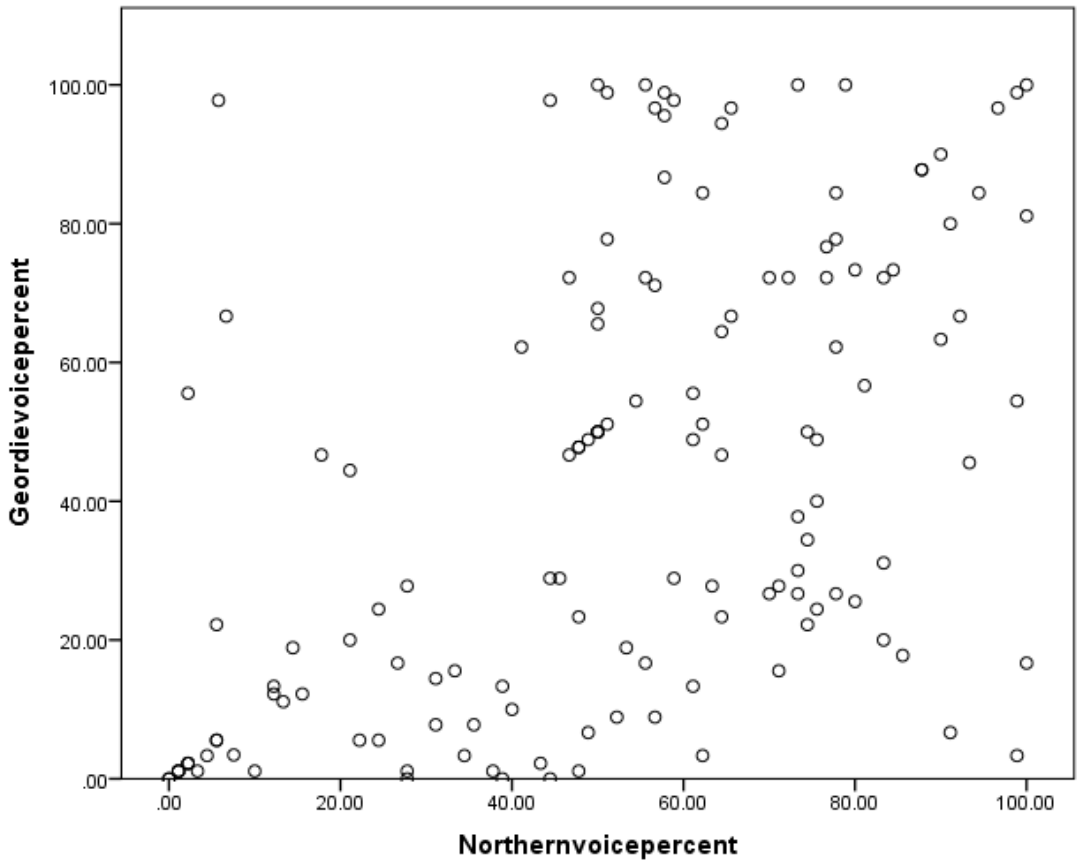

Figure 7-6 Scatterplot showing scores of northern voice affiliation (as a percentage score) on the x axis and scores for Geordie voice affiliation on the y axis

The scatterplot places scores of northern voice affiliation (as a percentage score) on the x axis, and Geordie voice affiliation (as a percentage score) on the y axis. The scatterplot suggests some degree of relationship in the participants' responses to the label 'Geordie' and 'northern' for describing their own voice. However, for some participants there is dissociation between the two labels. Some of those participants who gave a positive response to only one of the labels used the extremes of the scale to distance the two labels. At the extreme of the x axis there are some individuals who claim 'northern' as a voice label but do not claim 'Geordie' speech as their own at all. At the extreme of the y axis, there are some individuals who have strongly agreed with the label 'Geordie' to describe their own voice, but who do not consider the label 'northern' to be representative of their voice.

Pearson's correlation tests were conducted to ascertain whether the correlation between responses to the label 'Geordie' and to the label 'northern' was statistically significant. The

Pearson correlation coefficient for northern voice affiliation and Geordie voice affiliation is .510, which is significant ($p < .001$ for a two-tailed test), based on 138 complete observations (i.e., cases with non-missing values for both northern and Geordie affiliations). The correlation showed a significant correlation between affiliation scores for both of the labels. The correlation suggests that for the majority of individuals among the participant group, Northern and Geordie voice labels are mainly claimed or denied together as a pair**.**

7.1.3. Discussion of ratings along the voice affiliation scales

The tendency to claim and deny both of the labels as a pair supports the view put forward by Beal & Cooper (2015 p46), that similar connotations have become enregistered to ways of speaking at both the supra-regional 'northern' level and the local level, who state 'Many of the social values linked to 'northern' language features, are intertwined with those for individual varieties'. A sizeable proportion of the participants oriented away from both of the labels, and this begs the question; if they did not think of their voice as northern, what do they think it is? Prior research has found that people fail to perceive 'non-standard' variants in their own speech (Giles 1972). Some of the speakers who reject both labels may regard their own speech as 'standard', and possibly, for these participants, the term 'northern' still indicates non-standard speech, with which they wish to disassociate themselves. Labels have previously been found to elicit more stereotyped responses than samples of speech (Bishop et al 2005), thus the prototypical speaker associated with the label 'northern' perhaps evokes the institutional stereotype described in Chapter 1: the portrayal of the north as 'other'.

More frequent denial of the Geordie voice label may be due to the persistent stigma associated with the variety. Jensen (2017) found that the people who were most likely to deny that they used specific local forms were those who also claimed a more middle-class identity, suggesting that enregistered Geordie forms were associated with a working-class identity. It is feasible that the participants in the present study associated the label 'Geordie' with a class identity which they did not wish to share.

However, in recent years it has been suggested that levelling of local variants has resulted in the emergence of a 'General Northern English' variety which functions as a standard in the north of England, associated with middle-class speakers. Strycharczuk et al (2020), note that 'One type of evidence is attitudinal, and it is expressed by speakers explicitly

classifying their own accent as "northern," as opposed to, for instance, "Geordie" (Newcastle)'. Previous study has highlighted that for younger speakers, 'northern' may index a preferred, more modern speech variety (Watt 2002). The title of Watt's paper 'I don't speak with a Geordie accent, I speak like, the northern accent', was taken from a comment by one individual, but the findings in this section support the notion that such identification with a wider regional identity may be prevalent.

7.1.4. The relationship between perceived degree of difference from local voices and affiliation with the local voice label

Two different measures were used to identify 'claiming' and 'denial' of the local voice, namely *degree of difference* and *voice affiliation*. Degree of difference is a measure of perceived difference or similarity between the participant's own voice and each of the voices included in the speech stimulus. As reported in chapter 5, participants evaluated each voice using a 10-point scale for the two bipolar statements 'the speaker sounds exactly like me' vs 'the speaker sounds totally different from me'. In response to the two Geordie speakers, presented in section 5.3, results for this measure are interpreted as 'claiming' of the local voice where scores are between 1-5, whereas scores between 6-10 are interpreted as indications of denial of the local way of speaking. The second measure, voice affiliation, is a measure of self-reported identification with the local voice, presented as a conceptual label. Participants used a visual analogue scale to indicate levels of agreement with the statements 'my voice is Geordie' and 'my voice is northern'.

In order to identify whether there is a linear relationship between the two measures of claiming and denial, a scatterplot was generated. A linear fit line suggested a negative correlation between degree of difference with the Newcastle speakers and belief that the participant's own voice was Geordie. The fit line was not as close as expected. Nevertheless, a trend was identified, so Pearson's correlation tests were conducted to ascertain whether the correlation was statistically significant. The test was conducted for both of the Newcastle voices.

Firstly, the relationship between perceived degree of difference from the NCLW speaker, and affiliation with the 'Geordie' voice label was investigated. The Pearson correlation coefficient for degree of difference with the NCLW speaker and affiliation with the

‘Geordie’ voice label is -.522, which is significant ($p < .001$ for a two-tailed test), based on 137 complete observations (i.e., cases with non-missing values for both degree of difference and voice affiliation). Using Cohen’s guidelines to interpret the strength of the correlation, there is a large correlation between the two variables (above .5), suggesting quite a strong negative relationship between perceived degree of difference with the NCLW speaker and perception of their own voice as Geordie (Cohen 1988 p 79-81).

The relationship between perceived degree of difference from the NCLE speaker, and affiliation with the ‘Geordie’ voice label was also investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation co-efficient. Again, there was a strong, negative correlation between the two variables, r=-.545, n=136, p=<.001, with high levels of Geordie voice affiliation associated with lower levels of degree of difference.

Participants who claimed stronger levels of affiliation with the conceptual voice label ‘Geordie’ were more likely to perceive lower levels of difference between their own voice and the Newcastle speakers, a finding that was consistent for both of the Newcastle speakers.

By measuring the relationship between claiming of similarity with the Newcastle speakers, and claiming of the ‘Geordie’ voice label, it was possible to ascertain whether the participants considered one, both or neither of these speakers to be ‘Geordie’. The results suggest that both of the speakers NCLW and NCLE were perceived to be ‘Geordie’ equally, which has implications for the interpretation of responses to the two Newcastle speakers reported in chapter 5. Levels of perceived ‘Geordieness’ seemingly do not account for the contradictions seen in responses to the two Newcastle speakers.

7.2. **The place identity scale**

This section outlines results of the place affiliation scale task. This part of the study aimed to establish the extent to which, if at all, overtly expressed affiliation was claimed with local and wider regional places Firstly, differences in orientation towards the city (Geordie), area (north-eastern), regional (Northern), national (English) and British identities were identified.

7.2.1. Measurement of place identity

The relational analogue scale used in the present study was adapted from the method used by Watt and Llamas (2014) in their study of language and identity in the Scottish border region. The relational analogue scale was used to reveal the relative importance to each participant of different place identities.

Participants were presented with an unmarked continuous line, representing a cline between two opposite labels, 'least important' and 'most important'. Participants were asked to mark a point along the line, at any point of their choosing, to indicate the extent that different identity labels applied to them. The identity labels offered to participants were, as in the border study, tailored to the locality, and ranged from the local to the national. Participants were also invited to contribute additional or alternative 'other' identity labels. Each of the five labels suggested were identities which every participant could claim, unlike the sixth label, 'other' which would differ between participants.

Participants had no difficulty in understanding how to complete the scale according to the instructions. Where the task was not attempted, this is because some participants did not have the opportunity to attend the whole of the data collection session. Results from these participants were removed from this section of the analysis (N=135). Participants almost all were able to mark some point on the scale to express their affiliation with each of the five identity labels. A minority added a sixth label to show affiliation with another 'place you feel you belong' or 'place you feel is important to you'. A smaller minority returned incomplete scales. It was decided to keep these in the analysis because the participant's perception of the irrelevance of the other identity labels was a valid result. These missing values were recorded as zero. Some participants chose to overtly indicate the irrelevance of some of the labels by placing them at the zero point on the scale. The entire scale was used in responses. In some cases, individual participants used the full range offered by the scale to associate themselves closely with one (or more) of the identity labels and to distance themselves from others.

To prepare this data for analysis, every point on the line was measured in millimetres as a distance from the 'least important' end of the cline. Thus, a higher number indicates greater importance. These scores ranged from a minimum of zero to a maximum of 155mm. For ease of interpretation, all scores were converted to percentages. This produced a set of up to six scores for each participant who had attempted the task.

7.2.2. Mean scores showing relative importance of affiliation towards place identity labels

Firstly, the mean scores for each identity label were calculated, demonstrating which identity label was strongest overall, as well as differences in the relative importance ascribed to orientation towards different identity labels. The mean scores presented in Figure 7-7 are in order of proximity, from the most local, Geordie through area, to regional to national.

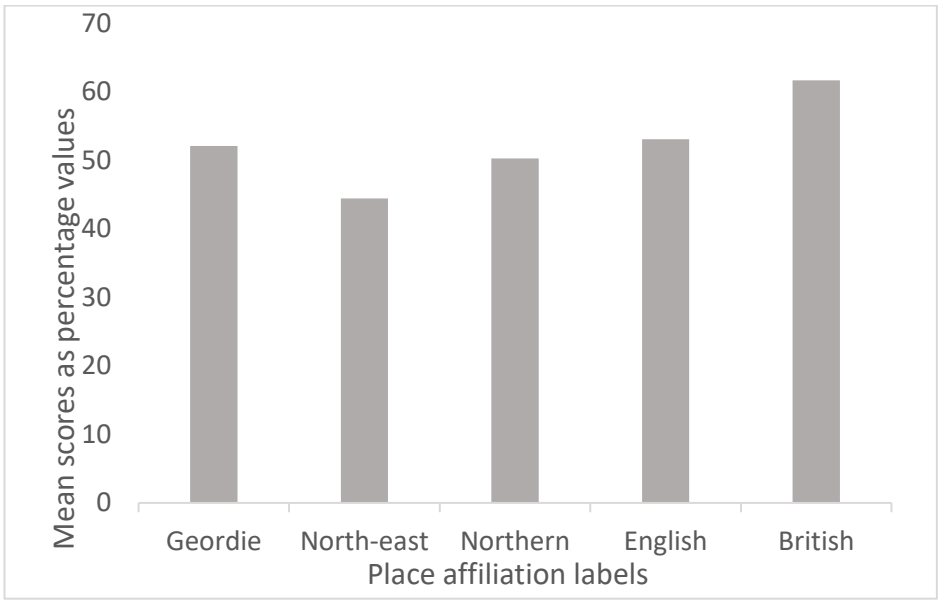

Figure 7-7 Mean percentage scores showing overall affiliation with each identity label (max possible score=100)

It should be noted that although scores above 50% are interpreted as being positive responses towards the labelled identities, indicating they are claimed as relatively important to participants, scores below this point should not be considered to be negative on this scale. Lower-scoring responses to the label could indicate a minor, less pertinent, but still well-regarded identity label. In the present study, mean scores suggest that the young participants in Newcastle upon Tyne, strongly identify with the label 'British' in preference to all other labels, with a mean percentage score of 62%. The mean percentage scores suggest moderate identification with all other identity labels. The local city (Geordie) and wider regional (northern) and national (English) place identities are claimed fairly equally, scoring 52%,

50% and 53% respectively. The only mean score indicating a weaker orientation to the place identity label is 44%, in response to the local area (North-east) place label. The strong score for the British place identity label is particularly interesting, considering that Watt and Llamas found that 'Young people are more ready to describe themselves as British then older ones' (Watt and Llamas, 2017 p 205). The young people in the present study are not only willing to claim British identity but do so in preference to all other place identity labels.

A one-way repeated-measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate whether there was any significant difference in participants' affiliation to the local and wider regional place labels (N= 135). The results of the ANOVA indicated a significant effect for place labels, Wilks Lambda = .85, F (4.131) = 5.81, p< .001, multivariate partial eta squared = .15, which according to Cohen's guidelines indicates a large effect size (Cohen 1988 p 284-7). Thus, there is significant evidence to support the idea that the participants orient with different degrees of closeness towards at least one of the label identities compared with others.

Table 7.1 Descriptive statistics for the affiliation scores for 5 place identity labels (British, English, Geordie, North-eastern, Northern)

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
British	61.70	30.14	135
English	53.09	29.18	135
Geordie	52.10	37.52	135
Northern	50.28	30.48	135
North-eastern	44.44	30.40	135

In order to find out which of the identity labels were significantly different, post-hoc comparisons were computed. Significant differences in orientations towards the voice affiliation labels revealed by the pairwise comparison tests are presented in Table 7.2. Significant results are indicted in bold type and with an asterisk.

Table 7.2 Significant results from pairwise comparisons between scores for affiliation with place identity labels

	British	English	Geordie	North	Northeast
British	-				
English	**.033 ***	-			
Geordie	.301	1.000	-		
North	**.015 ***	1.000	1.000	-	
Northeast	**.000 ***	.171	.100	.207	-

Bonferroni adjusted

These results suggest that the participants oriented differently towards the British place identity label, compared with others. Significantly, the British label scored differently in contrast with English, Northern and North-east labels, but not significantly differently from Geordie. Taking the Geordie identity as a baseline, there seemed to be no real difference in affiliation between other local, area regional or national labels.

7.2.3. Frequencies of scores showing distribution of stronger and weaker affiliation

Whilst mean results appear to show moderately strong orientation towards most of the identity labels, standard deviations point to mixed responses in every case. Minimum and maximum scores reveal that extreme results are found at both ends of the cline for every label suggesting that mean results obscure some strongly felt differences in the importance ascribed to place identities. Therefore, to ascertain whether moderate strength typifies orientations towards identity labels, frequency data was also measured. In order to give a clear view of the shape of the data, the histograms in Figure 7-8 show frequencies of participants who affiliated with the place labels across the range of possible scores.

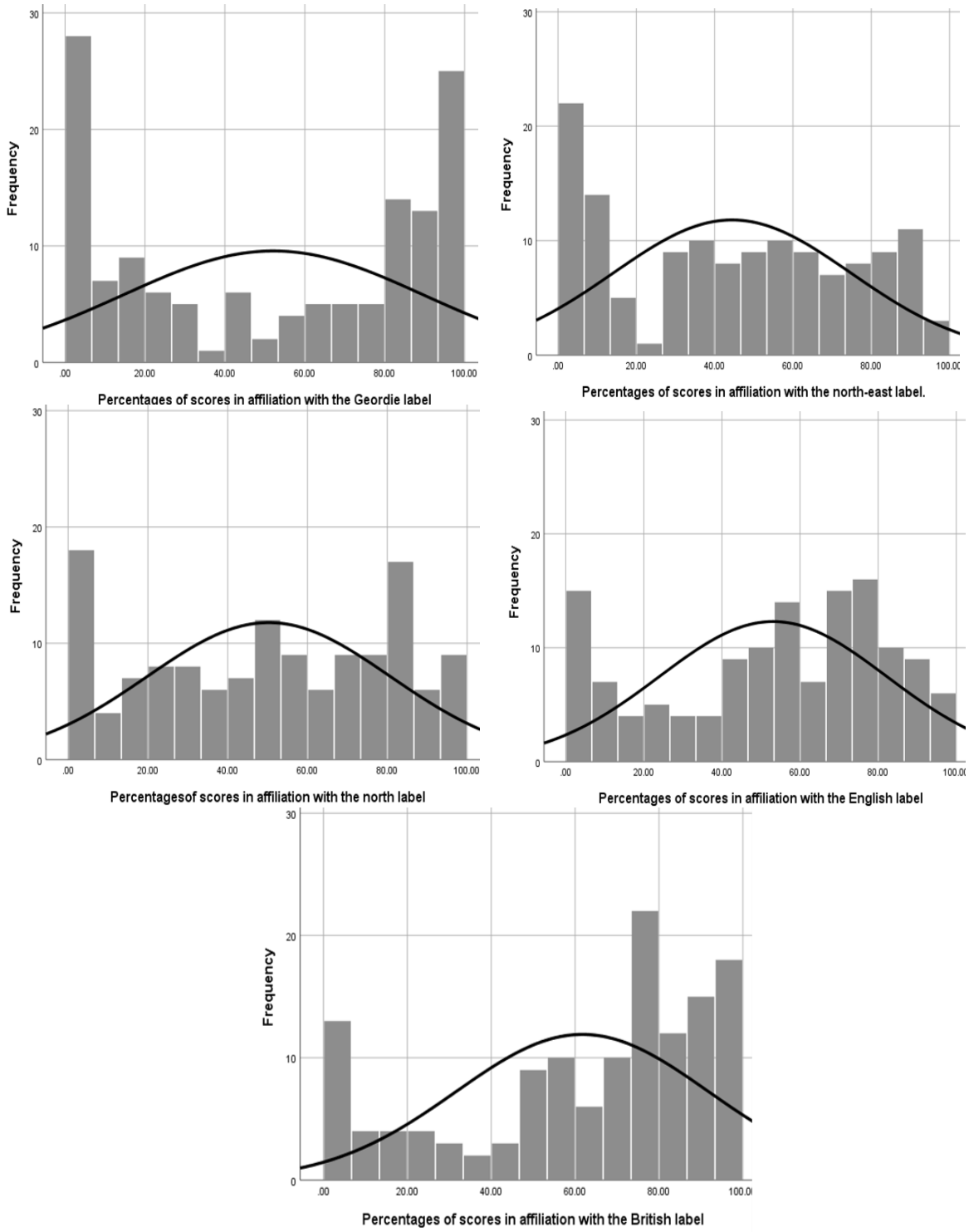

Figure 7-8 Frequencies of participants who affiliated with each of the place labels across the range of possible scores

The frequencies of responses for each of the percentage score categories allows comparison of the strength of affiliation towards each of the place identity labels. The distribution shows that the full range of scores was used in response to every label, indicating lack of agreement between participants. There is notable polarity in affiliations found in response to the Geordie place label, which is less evident in responses to the other labels. The responses to the northern place label are the most evenly distributed across the range of possible scores compared to the other labels.

At the right-hand side of the x-axis, scores for Geordie, northern, British, and English indicate strong identification. The north-east label is the exception, with the most frequently occurring scores indicating weak identification. Nevertheless, positions at the 'least important' end of the cline, at the extreme left-hand side of the x-axis, are also selected by a sizeable minority in response to every label.

Interestingly, between the two most local labels, patterns of distribution notably differ. Seemingly, a more localised Geordie identity can be very important to participants, whereas a north-east label triggers weaker identification. There is some dispute, as outlined in chapter 1, about the importance of the north-east region in political and cultural life. Beal (2010) and Llamas (2017) have argued that local government boundaries can be influential in local identities. If, as suggested in chapter 1, the succession of changes in governance experienced in the north-east has weakened the concept of a coherent area identity (Lemprière & Lowndes 2019, Shaw and Robinson 2018) and such identity as exists is characterised by economic deprivation (Pike et al 2019) , this may well have been reflected in the relative unimportance of this level of identity in the responses of young people.

7.2.3.1. *Affiliation to 'other' identity labels*

Only 31 respondents selected an 'other' label in addition to the five listed. Figure 7-9 shows the distribution of scores allocated to this label, binned at increments of 10%.

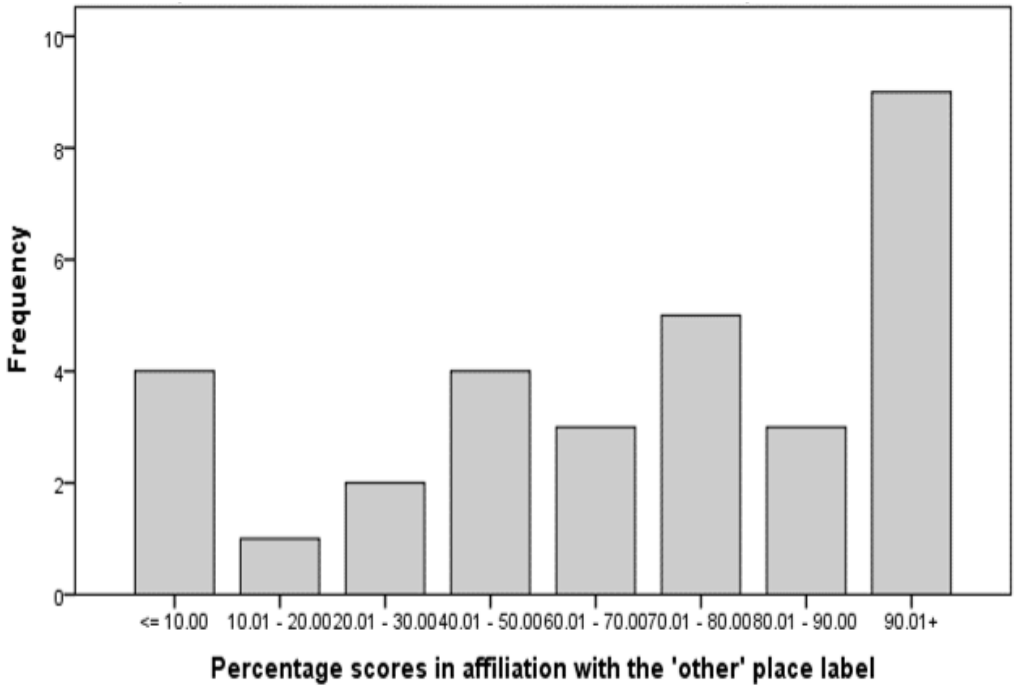

Figure 7-9 Frequencies of scores in affiliation with the 'other' place label N=31. Max score =100

Unsurprisingly, where an 'other' category was named, the affiliation scores for this label were most frequently strong, suggesting their chosen identity label was particularly important to the participants. Hence, the most frequently occurring scoring was in the 90-100% category. Nevertheless, a greater total number of the participants selected different responses along the scale, again using the whole of the scale to indicate different strength of affiliation with their 'other' place.

Scores for this scale highlight that weak identification should not be interpreted as negativity. If individuals were motivated to add an additional identity label, then this is evidently of some value to them.

As fewer 'other' labels were included than anticipated, this category did not yield significant information. However, some observations were made. Local and wider regional affiliations were seen in the 'other' labels selected. The majority of 'other' responses referenced national identities, most of which were non-British (e.g., African, Polish, Mexican), although Irish and Scottish were also mentioned. Four participants chose broader pan-national identities (European, Asian).'Freshy' also referenced Asian identity but may be seen as a social rather than a specific national label. More broadly still, two global identities were listed (global, human). 'Mixed race' was claimed by one participant and

another listed three racial identities. British local identities were selected by three participants (Northumberland, Teesside, Manchester) and two people chose a suburban localised identity ‘Gossy boys’ in reference to the suburb of Gosforth. Social rather than regional identity (posh,) was claimed by one participant.

7.2.4. Relationships between affiliation scores for place identity labels

Whereas both the mean scores and frequency scores showed a preference for British as an identity label in the group as a whole, the frequency charts show that there is strongly felt differences of opinion within the participant group. The Geordie identity label is particularly polarising. The relational analogue scale was used in collection of this data to allow for recording of the relative differences between scores for each participant. Following Watt and Llamas (2014) one of the labels was used as a basis for comparison with scores for other identity labels. In order to look more closely at the relationship between identity labels, correlations were performed, using the Geordie identity label as the basis for comparison.

Firstly, the relationship between affiliations with the ‘Geordie’ place identity label and the ‘north-eastern’ place identity label was investigated. The Pearson correlation coefficient for affiliation with the ‘Geordie’ and ‘north-eastern’ place label is .498, which is significant ($p < .001$ for a two-tailed test), based on 133 complete observations (i.e., cases with non-missing values for both measures of affiliation). Using Cohen’s guidelines to interpret the strength of the correlation, there is a medium correlation between the two variables (.30-.49), suggesting a moderately positive relationship between affiliation with the ‘Geordie’ and ‘north-eastern’ place identity labels. (Cohen 1988 p 79-81).

Secondly, the relationship between affiliations with the ‘Geordie’ place identity label and the ‘northern’ place identity was investigated There was a moderately positive correlation between the two variables, r=.351, n=131, p=<.001, with higher levels of ‘Geordie’ place affiliation associated with higher levels of ‘northern’ place association.

Significant correlation was not found between ‘Geordie’ place identity and ‘English’ place identity.

Finally, the relationship between ‘Geordie’ and ‘British’ place identity affiliations was also investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation co-efficient. There was a small,

negative correlation between the two variables, r=-.545, n=131, p=<.05, with high levels of 'Geordie' place identity slightly associated with lower levels of 'British' place identity.

The significant correlations found show associations between local, area, and regional identification. On the contrary, but to a more limited degree, local affiliation acts in opposition to wider British affiliation.

7.2.5. Discussion of ratings along the place affiliation scale

Watt and Llamas (2017) found that in Carlisle, older and younger speakers identified themselves differently, in that younger participants were more likely to orientate more positively towards a British identity. This is interpreted as 'suggesting that shifts are occurring in the sense of place assigned to border locations' (Moore & Montgomery, 2017 p 6). The results presented above indicate that such a shift may be prevalent among young people more generally, and not solely pertinent to border locations.

The relational analogue scale allowed participants to record preferences in reference-group orientation. This section of the data gives evidence that local and wider regional group memberships can be equally important in the young people's self-perception.

At the local level, the Geordie voice label was less likely to be claimed than the Geordie identity description, supporting the view of Jensen (2017) that negative connotations associated with stereotypes of Geordie speech are still prevalent. Jensen suggested that where participants distanced themselves from local forms, it was the variety rather than the index of 'localness' that they wished to distance themselves from, a view supported by the findings in this part of the study. Furthermore, this finding also suggests that non-Geordie-speaking local identities are perceived to exist. This is in keeping with the findings from the Scilly voices study, (Montgomery& Moore, 2018) where some speakers identified with a more standard-like Scillonian identity.

7.3. Summary of key findings from the affiliation data

The research question guiding this section of the enquiry was RQ3:

To what extent do claimed *affiliation* with the local voice and with the local place reflect ingrouping in responses to speakers?

The findings presented in Chapter 7 demonstrate that conceptual labels elicit different stereotypes than voice samples. The evidence from Chapter 5 showed that in response to speakers, patterns of evaluations outgrouped the speaker of Standard Southern British English (LON), ingrouped one of the Newcastle speakers (NCLE) and were less clear-cut in responses to other northern speakers. The 'general northern speakers' were centrally placed, suggesting that voices from a wider northern region do not appear to be particularly favoured or disfavoured. These speakers did not elicit strong ingroup or outgroup membership perceptions. In contrast, results from chapter 7 show that in responses to conceptual labels, 'northern' was significantly preferred to 'Geordie', which was disavowed as a descriptor of the participants' own speech.

Diverging from results of prior research in the north-east of England, where local identities were emphasised, (Burbano-Elizondo, 2006; Llamas, 2007; Pearce,2009) the findings in this chapter indicate that claiming of group memberships is not characterised by localism. Preference for other labels rather than 'Geordie; to describe place and voice affiliation does not seem to indicate denial of local identity, but perhaps a denial of the commodified stereotype, the strength of which threatens to erase recognition of variation within the speech community.

7.3.1. Voice affiliation

- Overall mean scores for Geordie are negative, but for northern are positive.
- Frequencies also show that a higher proportion of participants disagree that their voice is Geordie than agree that their voice is Geordie. Conversely, more participants agree their voice is northern than disagree that their voice is northern.
- Nevertheless, Northern and Geordie voice labels were mainly claimed or denied together.
- The largest grouping denied both voices.

- However, over 60% of participants affiliated positively with at least one label
- The distribution of scores shows considerable strength of feeling among some of the participant group in orientation towards the voice labels.

7.3.2. Place affiliation

- Participants strongly identify with the label 'British' in preference to all other labels.
- The mean percentage scores suggest moderate identification with all other identity labels.
- Frequency scores indicate greater intensity in both claiming and denial of 'Geordie' identity than of wider regional identity labels.
- The significant correlations show associations between local, area, and regional identification.
- To a more limited degree, local affiliation acts in opposition to wider British affiliation.

Chapter 7 has presented analyses of the affiliation scores collected from the questionnaire responses. In addition, comments about the findings obtained have been offered. The following chapter draws together discussion of the data and findings from all three sections of the research instrument. Since the guiding research questions have been discussed in turn in each of the three results chapters, Chapter 8 will focus on common threads that emerge from these findings.

Chapter 8: **Conclusions, limitations, and recommendations**

8.1. **Overview**

This study investigated current attitudes of older teenagers in Newcastle- upon- Tyne towards varieties of English from different levels of locality. It provided original attitudinal data from Newcastle, a context where a strong tradition of sociolinguistic research has predominantly focussed on production. The quantitative and qualitative results presented in the previous three chapters explored speaker-evaluations, free-association impressions and directly elicited affiliations, focussing on attitudes, stereotypes and ingroup membership. This section draws conclusions from the thesis, indicating what the results offer in terms of extending our knowledge of evaluations of speech in the north of England, and why the study is of interest methodologically and theoretically. The final section of this chapter then concludes the thesis by suggesting directions for further research in the area of language attitudes in the north of England.

8.2. **Conclusions drawn from the study**

The study first investigated the initial premise that the local speech of Newcastle-upon - Tyne is a stigmatised variety. The research presented in Chapter 1 confirmed that accented speech is indexed to well-established social meaning. The wider context of perceptions of the north, its speech and its speakers were explored by consulting literary and political studies which give evidence of a prevalent hegemonic discourse in which the north is viewed as 'other' and inferior to the south of England. Further, there was evidence that within the north, the north-east of England was perceived to be particularly disadvantaged. Although connotations of northern speech can have some positive compensatory associations, lack of status was found to dominate cultural stereotypes of northerners and their ways of speaking. Hence, the evidence presented in Chapter 1 appeared to support the view suggested by Watts (2002) that the social stigma associated with Newcastle speech may negatively influence perceptions of their own speech community amongst young people in Newcastle. These cultural connotations of the north, northerners and northern ways of speaking formed a basis from which to interpret the data gathered in the present study, in which responses to speakers offered evidence of current social meanings of local and wider regional varieties of speech.

The review of theoretical concepts presented in Chapter 2 attempted to integrate measurement of speaker-evaluations with a process model which understands language attitudes to be interactions through which listeners distance themselves from or connect to speakers. Preston's framework of language regard provided an inclusive starting point to develop an approach to the study, as it encompasses not only measurement of responses to language variety, but also the societal influences on those attitudes. The framework developed for the present study conceives of this influence as bi-directional, consistent with the interactionist understanding of attitudes adopted. This review also concluded that as stereotypes seemingly result from two dimensions of person perception, it thus seemed likely that the stereotype content model may be applicable to analysis of attitudes in response to a speech stimulus of accented speech.

Previous language attitudes research in the north of England gave evidence that in England southern speakers have been evaluated more favourably than northern speakers with respect to status, but there were some suggestions that this could be changing amongst young people. It was also evident that accentism is a problem for speakers of northern speech varieties, yet local ways of speaking perform social identity functions for individuals., so there is a tension in responses to language varieties for speakers of northern urban varieties, which would be expected to result either in linguistic insecurity, or covert prestige.

Given the historical association of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in the north of England, with particularly traditional and somewhat stigmatised stereotypes of both speech and speakers, together with the persistent belief in the existence of a 'north-south divide' signifying inequality in British society, young people growing up to be 'Geordie' are faced with the challenge of asserting a linguistic identity which is well-regarded but also loyal. At the beginning of this century, Watt (2002) suggested that for younger speakers, 'northern' may index a preferred, more modern speech variety. Since then, a generation of 'Geordies' has grown to adulthood, shaping their self-perception amid shifting social and cultural circumstances. The current study contributes to our understanding of language in the north of England by supplying up-to-date information revealing the extent to which linguistic insecurity still characterises local speech in Newcastle, and the degree to which young people orient towards broader or more localised speech community membership.

8.2.1. Evaluations of speech in the north of England

The research questions guiding this study were designed to reveal several outcomes, each providing up-to-date information about current language attitudes of young people in Newcastle-upon Tyne towards their own speech community.

8.2.1.1. *Neither linguistic insecurity nor covert prestige characterise attitudes towards local speech.*

The results of this study challenge the view that the social stigma historically associated with Newcastle speech determines responses to the speech variety. The findings provide evidence that the stigma associated with Geordie speech appears to persist with respect to the label 'Geordie' but does not necessarily apply in interactions with examples of speech. One of the local speakers was highly regarded along both status and social attractiveness dimensions, a finding that was replicated with scale responses and free-chosen spontaneous associations, both of which profiled him as a 'standard' speaker. This is particularly interesting as the social stigma associated with Geordie speech has been suggested as an explanation for the movement away from localised forms which has been documented in variationist sociolinguistic research. Social competition can enhance status for a group where an alternative to the status quo exists. Supralocalisation, or levelling of local voices occurring throughout the northern region of England has given rise to the notion that a General Northern English (GNE) variety may be emerging, as an alternative standard for northern speakers. The favoured ingroup responses to one of the Newcastle speakers, NCLE, in which significantly higher social attractiveness scoring was accompanied by favourable status evaluations, possibly indicate that he is perceived to be a GNE speaker.

In contrast to the predictable patterns frequently found in previous work, whereby the lower status attributed to local speech as is compensated by higher social attractiveness ratings, covert prestige is not evident in the attitudes of the young people sampled in this research. Creative strategies for preferencing the ingroup involve identifying alternative prestige for ingroup characteristics in order to enhance self-esteem. Hence, covert prestige attaches to certain vernacular varieties of speech where they are indexed to characteristics such as strength, humour or being 'down -to-earth'. Such compensatory valorisation was not seen in responses to the Newcastle speakers.

A somewhat surprising finding is that although listeners reported speaking equally similarly to both of the Newcastle speakers, this reported behavioural tendency was not

reflected in listeners' evaluative responses, where the two speakers were profiled differently. Nevertheless, the study can confidently conclude that moderately accented Newcastle speech is not sufficient to elicit negative language regard.

8.2.1.2. ***Traditional stereotypes of 'standard' southern speech persist, but stereotypes of northern speech are less consistent.***

The analyses of evaluations and impressions suggest that the culturally established opinions and judgements identified in Chapter 1 continue to influence responses to Standard Southern British English, but traditional stereotypes of speakers of northern varieties may be being disrupted. Analysis of evaluations demonstrated how speakers were profiled along the two evaluative dimensions, and groupings of speakers were identified. Prevalent stereotypes of speakers point to outgrouping of the speaker of Standard Southern British English, ingroup favour towards one of the two Geordie speakers, and less coherent profiling of other northern speakers.

Impressions of LON constructed his position as 'other' in several ways. Evaluative responses along the 'big two' dimensions were different than from every other speaker. Keywords analysis revealed distinctively different lexical items were used to convey impressions of this speaker. Moreover, the distribution of keywords across thematically grouped categories was similar for all speakers with the exception of LON. Evaluations and impressions in response to the SSBE speaker (LON) appear to confirm that a standard language ideology persists among young people in Newcastle, shaping their judgement of speech and speakers. Ratings for LON were significantly higher along the 'high-ranking' dimension than for every other speaker. For the 'friendly' dimension he was one of three speakers with significantly lower scoring than most of the other speakers. Using the stereotype content model to interpret evaluations, he was placed in the 'envy' quadrant of the BIAS map, where high scoring along the competence dimension accompanies lower ratings for warmth. The stereotype content model interprets such stereotypes in terms of competition. In a school setting, where aspirational academic target-setting is an important element of the school ethos, emphasising excellent achievement, participants may have perceived the speaker as a competitor for future economic opportunities. Ingrouping and outgrouping are interpreted further with reference to the status improvement strategies outlined in Social Identity Theory: individual mobility, social competition, and social creativity. Within the dataset there were instances of individuals who perceive their own

voice to be more similar to this speaker than to any of the northern speakers. Self-esteem may be enhanced for an individual by identifying at the interpersonal level. Where social mobility is believed to be possible, an individual may hope to move between groups to enhance status. In a school setting, where social mobility is particularly pertinent, 'talking proper' may still be perceived to be an essential requirement for greater academic success and progression beyond. Nevertheless, prevalent outgrouping of this speaker indicates that he does not represent a reference norm to which most participants aspire. This interpretation is in keeping with the notion of a 'superstandard' (Preston 2013), a variety which is considered correct but is not a target for speakers.

Findings in relation to evaluations of northern speakers showed there was not a pronounced compensation effect, whereby low-status evaluations of non-standard speakers are balanced by higher regard in terms of social attractiveness. Findings demonstrated that the inter-relationship between the two dimensions in responses to the most and least favoured speakers were characterised by a 'halo and horns' effect' (Dion et al, 1972). The most popular speaker, NCLE was characterised as all-good, whereas the least popular speakers, MAN and MID were characterised as all-bad. Stereotypes do not seem to be particularly entrenched when the stereotype content model was applied as a tool for analysis of results. Moderate scoring for speakers profiled in the ambivalent 'pity' quadrant of the BIAS map suggested that stereotypes of other northern speakers were not strongly held.

8.2.1.3. ***Concepts important in forming impressions of speakers reproduce the 'big two' dimensions***

Thematic analysis of the keywords was revealing of the ideological assumptions underpinning stereotypes attributed to speakers, and whether the deficiency view of accented speech was being accepted or challenged. I found that impressions of speakers reveal language ideological assumptions of superiority and inferiority which manifest in several latent themes. Largely, these reproduce the 'big two' dimensions of person perception suggested by the stereotype content model. Perception of competence was apparent in the emergent themes of maturity v immaturity, respect v ridicule, competence v incompetence, and expertise v ignorance. Perception of warmth was evident in the emergent themes of social attractiveness v repulsion, acceptance v rejection, dynamism v dullness and associating v dissociating. Apart from these, the theme of moderation v excess,

suggests that acceptability of speech and speakers is determined not only by presence or absence of attributes, but is also constrained by the degree to which these are manifest.

8.2.1.4. ***Three listener strategies emerged for distancing and connecting: appraisals, affective reactions, and ascribed perspectives***

The study offered some evidence about the construction of speaker stereotypes through positioning strategies of listeners. It provided additional insight into the classification of speakers as 'other', suggesting that the evaluative process involves three interactive strategies: *appraisals*, *affective reactions*, and *ascribed perspectives* through which listeners connect to or distance from speakers. Of these, ascribed perspectives seemed to be particularly important in constructing attitudes towards speakers.

8.2.1.5. ***Localism did not characterise self-reported identity preferences***

Directly elicited affiliations with conceptual labels of voice and of place demonstrated that conceptual labels elicited different prototypes than verbal guise speaker samples. Localism did not characterise preferences. A surprising finding was that British was the most popularly chosen identity label, in preference to local, area, regional and national labels. Participants also significantly preferred to label their own voice 'northern', as opposed to 'Geordie'. Commodification of Geordie speech as a 'brand' has iconised specific lexical items and characteristic morphemes, to the extent that individuals who do not believe their own voice is represented by this limited repertoire of forms may reject the label 'Geordie' in favour of a less constraining 'Northern' label. This result indicates that young people in Newcastle orient towards a less localised speech community identity, suggesting support for the view put forward by (Watt 2002) that young people may affiliate with a more 'modern' identity associated with forms with wider currency. This preference is not reflected in greater favour towards other northern speakers compared with Geordie speakers, one of whom was profiled as a standard speaker. Neither is local speech denied in the degree of difference task, where both Geordie speakers were rated more similar to their own voice than other northern speakers. Taken together, findings suggest that participants select the term 'northern' to indicate a reference norm that is Geordie, but not too Geordie.

8.2.2. Theoretical and methodological contributions of the study

8.2.2.1. *Theoretical contribution of the study*

Seemingly contradictory views of language attitudes, either as stable measurable structures or alternatively as social constructs have given rise to theoretical debate amongst language attitudes scholars. The study adopted an integrated approach to the study of *language attitudes, stereotypes* and *in-group membership*, which attempts to reconcile concepts and processes from disparate fields. Language attitudes are conceptualised as evaluative social practices that attribute meaning to the speech of others, and as such are considered to be dynamic processes. Nevertheless, perceptions of speakers draw on available construct resources which are constrained by enduring cultural associations, societal ideology, and familiar discourses. In this framework, expressions of language attitudes are interpreted as acts of positioning, which can be interpreted as actions of distancing from or connecting to others. I propose that speaker evaluation tasks should be viewed as interactions and are most usefully interpreted as instances of orienting towards speakers.

The study applies a framework for analysis which draws on the language regard model, social identity theory and the stereotype content model.

8.2.2.2. *Methodological contribution of the study*

The study proposes that a combination of three research methods, *evaluations, impressions,* and *affiliations,* is useful to throw light on the structure and construction of attitudes towards local and wider regional varieties and speakers.

The study contributes to ongoing methodological debate into the usefulness and limitations of the matched-guise technique, by offering a research design that emphasised the importance of the situated context of speaker-evaluations. Hence a contextually appropriate original speech stimulus was designed for the study site. Semantic categories of lexical choices used to express impressions showed that concepts important to listeners were to some extent task dependent. The study thus supports the view that situated contexts as well as cultural ideologies can be central to interpretation of quantitative language attitudes study, as advocated by previous scholars (Liebscher & Dailey O'Cain, 2009; Soukup, 2012).

The study also contributes to the debate concerning the value of contextual labels or speech samples as attitude objects in language attitude research design. As in previous work, participants oriented differently in response to contextual labels than to speaker samples. The study upholds the value of use of the speech stimulus as an attitude object, but demonstrates the importance of the caveat pointed out by Garrett (2010), that the researcher must bear in mind that something more than regional dialect can be influencing evaluations.

The study provides further evidence of the usefulness of the keywords technique popularised by Garrett, which has been widely adopted in perceptual dialectology to gather impressions of conceptually labelled regional varieties. The application of the technique in responses to a speech stimulus comprising nine speakers provided insight into concepts important to listeners in forming impressions of speakers. I have demonstrated how content analysis and bottom-up thematic analysis of free-chosen word associations can complement quantitative findings from traditional experimental designs.

8.2.2.3. ***Application of the stereotype content model***

The present study has used the Stereotype Content Model to interpret both evaluations of speakers and free-chosen word-associations in responses to speakers, offering a more comprehensive and rigorous picture of stereotypes influencing perceptions of accented speech.

Analysis of keywords enabled us to see whether or not the 'big two' dimensions encompass the salient concepts used by listeners in forming impressions of speakers. Keyword impressions of speakers were coded onto the 'big two' dimensions in 81% of cases. The findings provide further evidence that the two dimensions of person perception underlie evaluative responses to varieties of speech and their speakers, extending the application of the stereotype content model to interpret free-chosen word-association data. Impressionistic spontaneous associations helped to provide insight into the concepts important to listeners, and the extent to which lexical items differentiated speakers. Word associations give supporting evidence to theoretical assumptions of the primacy of warmth in the 'big two' dimensions, and, relatedly, the importance of affect in attitudes towards speakers.

According to Koch et al (2016), this model has generally been tested using conceptual labels of societal groups and pre-determined trait descriptors, with little application to free-

response data. In the present study, the analysis of keyword impressions allowed for a richer dataset of responses that were not limited to pre-determined trait descriptors (Garrett et al., 2005: 50). Giles and Rakic (2014) also comment that this model has been little used in analysis of speaker samples, a deficiency which the present study addresses. Therefore, the study offers a suggestion of how the model can be incorporated into the speaker-evaluation paradigm.

The current study aimed to provide a snapshot of perceptions of speech community membership amongst young people from Newcastle upon Tyne, as they reach maturity. Although it is recognised that the specific context shapes the construction of attitudes, and findings may not be generalisable, the study offers a useful exploration of current attitudes in a context where a strongly iconised characterological figure of 'Geordie' identity competes with a de-standardising trend. It is hoped that the results provide a useful contribution to knowledge about language and social identification by providing insight into the structure and construction of contemporary language attitudes among young people in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

8.3. Limitations of the study

A mixed methodology was used in order to mitigate against some of the limitations of individual elements in the research design. The reasons for methodological choices were fully explained in chapter 4. Nevertheless, in any research design, some degree of compromise is necessary, and each design decision places constraints on the possible interpretations of results. In this section, I wish to highlight certain limitations of the study, for two main reasons.

Firstly, some of the limitations resulting from specific design features may be avoidable by modifying elements of the design, and attention is drawn to where such modifications may improve future research using similar approaches. Secondly, I would like to highlight those limitations which are inherent in the approaches taken, and the extent to which these choices constrain the scope of the analysis.

8.3.1. Research design

The research design used a verbal guise instrument to elicit evaluations and impressions of speakers of selected varieties of English. Different responses to the two Newcastle speakers

highlight the difficulty inherent in this method, i.e. researchers cannot be certain that different responses to speakers result from the variety of accented speech rather than differences in prosody between speakers.

8.3.1.1. ***Acoustic properties of the recordings***

One of the advantages of a matched guise test using only one speaker to reproduce different varieties, is that confounding variables of voice characteristics of the speaker are reduced. Likewise, the recording can take place in a controlled environment, possibly a sound studio using high quality equipment. However, in the present study, recordings were made of the voices of different speakers, who were all recruited by the researcher in person. A decision was made to record each of the volunteers in a location nearby, so that it was as easy as possible for them to take part. It was also a consideration that this arrangement reduced the formality associated with setting up a recording studio appointment and would encourage more natural speech. However, whilst some of the recordings took place in a sound-proofed room in the library, others were in quiet areas in other public indoor spaces, which may not have had identical acoustic properties. Even so, speech samples were always recorded in quiet areas, and software was used to normalise the volume and quality of the speech samples where possible.

8.3.1.2. ***Prototypicality of speakers***

The issue of speaker prototypicality presents concerns in a verbal guise research design. The responses can more robustly be attributed to the speech community represented by the speaker rather than to the idiolect of the particular speech sample if more than one speaker is presented for evaluation from each speech group. This means that there would be double the number of speech samples, running the risk of listener fatigue. A balance must be decided between the number of varieties to be presented and the number of speakers of each variety. It was decided that the research instrument for the present study would include only one speaker of each variety, due to the range of varieties to be presented and the value of including a sizeable excerpt of speech from each. Listening time would otherwise have been excessive, particularly as the implementation of the task required participants to listen to the speech stimulus three times.

8.3.1.3. ***Intra-rater consistency***

The participants rated speakers along the two dimensions after hearing one recorded track per speaker. Repeated tracks would allow the researcher to test for intra-rater consistency. The duration of the recording clips used in the study prevented such a measure, for the same reason that only one speaker of each variety was selected, as piloting suggested that listener fatigue would be a problem.

8.3.1.4. ***Scales and scoring***

A scale of 1 to 10 was used to record evaluations in response to the speaker, which were later coded as positive or negative evaluations. The scale was selected for three reasons. Firstly, as a familiar vernacular scoring system (for instance it is used in the popular TV talent contest 'Strictly Come Dancing' for rating performances), it was easily understood by participants. Also, following Preston and Coleman (2000), a 10-point scale was considered the most useful in order to elicit a full range of responses. In addition, subjectivity in interpreting the meaning of word labels was avoided. Nevertheless, coding of positivity and negativity in responses depends on shared assumptions of the values attributed to each level of scoring. The score sheet presented to participants included a diagram showing a line divided into 10 numbered boxes, to act as a visual indicator that numbers 1-5 were in the negative half of the scale and numbers 6-10 were in the positive half of the scale. However, the scores were completed by entering a score out of 10 for each speaker in a box. It is quite possible that in this format, a score of 5 was interpreted by the participants as a half of 10, rather than falling into the negative half of the scale. Therefore, although the median score of 5.5 was taken to be the cut-off point between positivity and negativity in mean scores, this measure may under-represent positivity in the scoring.

8.3.1.5. ***Control of potentially confounding variables.***

<u>Speaker variables</u>

My study controlled for levels of education, gender, ethnicity and age differences by recording a speech stimulus comprising white males, aged approximately 20 years old, educated at university, deemed to be moderately accented. Therefore, the data can only be revealing of attitudes towards this type of speaker. For instance, in order to control for possible effects of gender on evaluations and impressions of speakers, all speakers were male. It is not therefore possible to know, from this study, whether the responses of the

young people who participated in the study would be different in response to female speakers, or the extent to which speaker ethnicity may impact on perceptions of Geordie identity.

Listener variables

The research design allowed for between-speaker differences in responses to be identified in the participant group as a whole. The participant group was considered to generally reflect the distribution of certain demographic factors in the wider population as seen in appendix E, providing a holistic representation of young people's attitudes in Newcastle upon Tyne towards local and wider regional varieties of speech. The study design did not allow for consideration of any significant difference according to within-group factors, such as gender, socio-economic grouping, or ethnicity of listeners, all of which may influence responses. It is likely that some of the heterogeneity found in responses may pattern according to such factors. For instance, the proportion of pupils whose first language is not English in the participating institution is 21.9%, and it is quite possible that minority ethnic participants, especially those who are bilingual, may have differing attitudes to white, monolingual participants.

8.3.2. Research approach

The study used Preston's language regard model as a starting point for framing the issues in the research, as this model recognises the common interests of different traditions of enquiry. Nevertheless, it is not possible within the limited scope of one project to be fully inclusive of all aspects of the model. In this study I used three types of measure to gain an insight into social identification amongst the participant group, i.e. *evaluations* of speakers, *impressions* of speakers and *self-reported affiliation* with contextual labels of voice and place identity. Hence, the study chiefly relies on the participants' responses to others as an indication of how they position themselves with regard to speech community membership. Between-speaker differences in evaluations were interpreted, using social identity theory, as being revealing of ingrouping and outgrouping of speakers from the locality and from the wider region. The stereotype content model was used as a lens to analyse the stereotypes evoked in response to each speaker. Impressions of each speaker were thematically coded subjectively by the researcher. These data were interpreted in terms of

distance from and connection to each speaker and provided some insight into how participants position ingroup and outgroup members in relation to themselves. However, the study design inherently limits the possible interpretations of how *personal* Geordie identities are perceived and negotiated by *individuals*.

8.4. **Suggestions for further research**

This research found that that amongst a participant group of young people on the threshold of adulthood, heterogeneity characterises responses to speakers of varieties of English. I would recommend that future study might aim to explore this heterogeneity further, by conducting large scale studies which are inclusive of the diverse population of Newcastle.

Firstly, I would recommend larger scale study that includes a comprehensive cohort of *listeners*, which does not impose categories on its subjects, but recognises that the range of participants may orient in different ways than those imposed by the researcher. Moreover, wide-ranging study design should seek to include a broad range of *speakers,* from different areas of Newcastle and from different social background in order to avoid further essentialising of the Geordie speech community.

Secondly, as evaluations of the two Geordie speakers differed significantly, despite the robust controls within the research instrument design, further fine-grained testing could reveal if these differences are dependent on specific variant usage. Pilot testing of a larger intended project suggested that within Newcastle perceived differences exist between different speakers, who might be considered 'real Geordie', 'less Geordie' 'charver' or 'posh' and that further, these differences were believed to exist in aerial locations. Although the degree of accented speech of all speakers in the speech stimulus was deemed moderate by adult listeners in a pre-data collection screening check, participants discriminated between the two Geordie speakers. Further study could unpick whether specific variants are responsible for these judgements, perhaps using the real time evaluation method used by Watson and Clarke (2015). Additionally, perceptual dialectology methods would reveal if there is any perceived difference between geographical locations in the west and east of Newcastle, as perceptual dialectology can sometimes be revealing of actual linguistic facts.

Methodologically, as indicated in the limitations section above, the study used responses to speakers as the key source for interpretation of ingroup and outgroup membership.

However other methods could also be used in future study to gain further insight into *individual's* perception of speech community membership. Future research could consider including reflective narrative discourse from participants about what Geordie speech and identity means to them, which would provide further insight into key issues which prompted my research questions.

The participants in the study all shared the experience of living in Newcastle for most of their formative years and attending state schools in Newcastle. Many of them, however, rejected 'Geordie' as an identity label. The study found that young people in the participant group were more likely to orient towards British identity than any other label, whereas Geordie was the most polarised identity. The extreme responses towards Geordie identity are interpreted as a response to the characterological figure of 'Geordie' as an iconised stereotype, which is either accepted or rejected by the young people, who may not imagine themselves to be represented by this stereotype. However, different life experience may result in differently imagined 'Geordie' identities. Further study could probe whether orientation to ''Geordie' identity differs between migrant and non-migrant individuals.

At the beginning of the thesis it was suggested that speech community membership, associated with widely held stereotypes of Geordie speech, may have a negative impact on individuals. The findings of the study suggest that speakers of the local variety are categorised differently than a conceptual label of the speech variety, accessing different stereotypes and consequently evoking different attitudes. In the light of this finding, it would be beneficial to conduct further study with a focus on the categorisation processes involved in characterising speech community membership.

It would seem that there is scope for future work to open up this enquiry. Currently, for example, the Manchester Voices project (https://www.manchestervoices.org) has a wide-ranging remit to explore and celebrate the diversity of voices in the city region. I suggest that the present research indicates that there would be merit in undertaking a project of similar scope in the city of Newcastle.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Tasks

Enter your code here ……..

Your code is your form and register number. Eg if you are in form 12Y and are number 6 on the register, you would write 12Y6

There are three parts to this activity:

1. Listen to speech recordings and make some responses
2. Answer three questions about the speaker
3. Questionnaire

If you agree, your answers will be used as part of a research project. **Full details will be given to you on a sheet to take home and read.**

We only use information from people who have agreed. You will need to sign and return the consent form. (I need to use your code to identify you for this part)

All information used in the study is anonymous.

Thank you!

Q1. I think the speaker sounds…

1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			

Q2. Should we choose this speaker?

Listen to the voices again. While listening, do you agree/ disagree with the following statements? Give a mark out of 10 for both statements in the table below.

- This person gives an impression of a friendly university.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Disagree totally

Agree totally

- This person gives an impression of a high-ranking university.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Speaker	Friendly / 10	High ranking /10
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		

Q3 How different is the speaker from your own way of speaking?

The speaker sounds exactly like me.

The speaker sounds totally different from me

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

speaker	Sounds different from me /10
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	

Q4 Where do you think the speaker may be from?

Place a dot or a X on the map for each speaker.

Speaker placement Britain map

Questionnaire

Who you are and where you live

1. Which part of Newcastle do you live in, or do you live somewhere else? If so where? ----------

---

2. Where you born in Newcastle or somewhere else? If so where?

Born in Newcastle Y ☐ N ☐ ----------

---

3. Here are 5 labels that you might feel are **important to** describe **who you are** and the **places you feel you belong to.** If there is another label that is important to you, you can add it to the list.

1) Geordie
2) North-eastern
3) Northern
4) English
5) British
6) Other- if there is any other label that you feel is important to you, what is it ?

Other = ----------

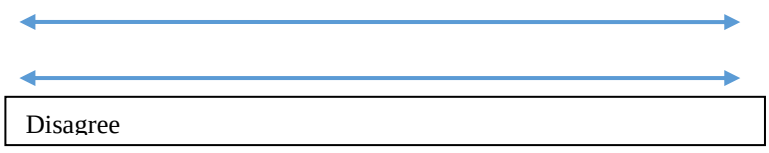
On the scale below, draw a vertical line to show how important each description is to you. Number or label each line.

You should have drawn 5 lines, or six if wanted to add an extra 'other'. Make sure you have numbered or labelled each line.

The way you talk

4. Now think about the **way you talk**. Draw a line on the scale to show how much you disagree or agree or with the statements:

a) My voice is Geordie
b) My voice is northern



Appendix B: Instructions for participants

The following eight PowerPoint slides were projected onto a whiteboard at the front of the classroom to guide participants in completing the question sheets.

Introductory information

We need your help to select speakers to go into schools to speak to school 6th form students about aspects of university life.

What *impression* do these speakers give to you?

- The clips you will hear are from speakers who are answering frequently asked questions about accommodation.
- Turn to page 1- (next slide for Q1)

Q1 First impressions- Quick responses

- Listen to each speaker talking about accommodation.
- Write down your **first impressions** of each speaker as fast as you can. There will be a short pause after each speaker for you to finish your answer.
- What are your **impressions** of this person? Write down the first 3 words or phrases that come to mind. Try not to think about this too much – just jot down what comes into your head.
- I think the speaker sounds…

Turn over the sheet to page 2 (next slide for Q2)

Q2 Should we choose this speaker? Listen to the voices again.

Do you agree/ disagree with the following statements?
Choose a number from 1-10 to show how far you agree/ disagree with the statement.

- This person gives an impression of a **friendly** university.

Disagree totally	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree totally

- This person gives an impression of a **high ranking** university.

Disagree totally	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Agree totally

Fill in your 2 scores for each speaker (on page 2) .

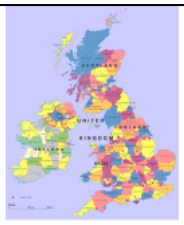
The information being collected today is actually for a piece of research about what language and sense of place mean to young people in Tyneside.

If you agree, your answers will be used as part of a research project. Full details will be given to you on a sheet to take home. We only use information from people who have agreed. All information is totally anonymous.

The second part of the research asks you about how different the voices sound from your voice, and where you think the speakers might be from.

The last section is a questionnaire

Turn to page 3 and 4 Listen for a third time. After each speaker answer both Q3 and Q4 . Then listen to the next speaker and answer Q3 and Q4 .



Q3.. Is the speaker's voice similar to or different from the way that you speak?

Choose a number from 1-10 to judge how similar or different the speaker is from the way you speak.

Exactly like me. You can hardly tell us apart	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Nothing like me

Q4. Where do you think the speaker may be from? Place a dot or a X on the map. (Don't forget to label which speaker goes with each dot!)

Questionnaire

Where you live

1. Which part of Newcastle do you live in, or do you live somewhere else? If so where?

---

2. Where you born in Newcastle or somewhere else? If so where?

---

3. Here are 5 labels that you might feel are **important to** describe **who you are** and the **places you feel you belong to.** If there is another label that is important to you, you can add it to the list.

1) Geordie
2) North-eastern
3) Northern
4) English
5) British
6) Other-if there is any other label that you feel is important to you, what is it ?----------

Draw a vertical line on the scale to show how important each description is to you. Number or label each line.

'least important'——————————————————'most important'

You should have drawn 5 lines, or six if wanted to add an extra 'other'. Make sure you have numbered or labelled each line.

The way you talk

4. Now think about the **way you talk**. Draw a line on the scale to show how much you agree or disagree with the statements:

a) My voice is Geordie 'Disagree'——————————————————'Agree'

b) My voice is northern 'Disagree'——————————————————'Agree'

Thank you for your help with this survey!

Any questions about this research?

The take-home sheet should answer , but also

- You can ask the researcher any time you see her around-

Or email

judith.taylor@northumbria.ac.uk

Appendix C: Speaker Transcripts

SPEAKER 1

Do you live in student halls, a flat, or a house? I live in a house. Is your room en-suite or do you share a bathroom? I share a bathroom. Can you work at home on your laptop or do you need to go to uni to use a computer? Little bit of both, depending on what software you need. Do you mostly do your own cooking or get a meal out? I mostly do my own cooking. Are you allowed to put up photos and posters on the walls to make yourself feel at home? Yes, you are. What's your top tip for first years, what should they look for when they are choosing a place to live? Something with good transport links.

SPEAKER 2

Is your accommodation far from uni? It's not too far from uni, about a ten minute walk. Can you work at home on your laptop or do you need to go to the university to use a computer? I definitely need a computer, can't do work from home. Is your room en-suite or do you share a bathroom? I share a bathroom between like five, six different people. Do you mostly do your own cooking, or do you eat meals out? I do a lot of cooking, but I don't really eat that much to be fair. If anything gets broken, will you have to pay extra money to get it replaced? Not a hundred percent sure on that one, but I'd say not really, not really.

SPEAKER 3

Is your accommodation far from uni? Where I'm living now is maybe a twenty-five minute walk. Is there enough desk space to spread out your books and papers? Not particularly in our house but we use the library. Can you work at home on your laptop or do you need to go to uni to use the computers? I go to uni to use the uni computers. Do you mostly do your own cooking or get a meal out? We cook ourselves every night. What's your top tip for first years, what should they look for when choosing a place to live? For me, I mainly focussed it around people who I wanted to live with because that was more important for me.

SPEAKER 4

Is your accommodation far from uni? No, it's about three hundred metres, it's perfect. Is your room en-suite or do you have a shared bathroom? I've got a shared bathroom. Are you allowed to put photos and posters on the walls to make yourself feel at home? Yeah, as

long as there's no holes in the wall. If anything gets broken do you have to pay extra money to get it replaced? Yeah, but that's the same anywhere. What's your top tip for first years, what should they look for when they are choosing a place to live? Just something that makes you feel comfortable and follow your intuition, whichever just feels like it suits you.

SPEAKER 5

Is your accommodation far from uni? No, it's only about ten minutes from uni. Do you mostly do your own cooking or get a meal out? Mostly I cook to save money. Are you allowed to put up photos and posters on the walls to make yourself feel at home? Yeah, I'm allowed to do that. Is your room en-suite or do you share a bathroom? I share a bathroom. What's your top tip for first years, what should they look for when they are choosing a place to live? Check how much of the stuff is broken in the house because a lot was in ours, falling to pieces.

SPEAKER 6

Do you live in student halls, a flat or a house? Live in a flat at the moment. Is your accommodation far from uni? About a twenty minute walk. Can you work at home on your laptop or do you need to go to uni to use computer? Mostly stay at home. Do you mostly do your own cooking or get a meal out? Cook most of the time. Is your room en-suite or do you share a bathroom? We share a bathroom. If anything gets broken will you have to pay extra money to get it replaced? Yeah I think so.

SPEAKER 7

Do you live in student halls, a flat or house? I just live in a house, with friends. Is your accommodation far from uni? It's about ten , fifteen minutes away. Can you work at home on your laptop or do you need to go in to uni to use a computer? I can work at home on a laptop but I find myself doing better with work if I use a uni computer. Do you mostly do your own cooking or get a meal out? It's a mix between the two to be honest, it's easier to get a meal out but I will do my own cooking when I can to save money.

SPEAKER 8

Is your accommodation far from uni? It's about a ten minute walk, so it's pretty easy to get in. Can you work at home on your laptop or do you need to go to uni to use a computer? I usually split my time fifty fifty between home and the library just so I'm not in the same

place all the time. If anything gets broken, will you have to pay extra money to get it replaced? It depends on how it gets broken, so if it's like an accident then it's fine but if you purposely break something then…

SPEAKER 9

Is your accommodation far from uni? It's about a half an hour walk. Is your room en-suite or do you share a bathroom? It's...I share a bathroom. Can you work at home on your laptop or do you need to go to uni to use a computer? I usually bring my laptop to uni. Are you allowed to put up photos and posters on the walls to make yourself feel at home? Yes I am. What's your top tip for first years, what should they look for when they are choosing a place to live? I'd definitely recommend student halls for first year.

speaker		Word count	Duration (seconds)	Speech rate (wpm)
1	NCLW	124	35	212.57
2	LDS	127	35	217.71
3	LIV	123	32	230.60
4	LON	116	33	210.91
5	MAN	110	35	188.57
6	MID	102	32	191.25
7	NCLE	115	34	202.94
8	SHE	100	31	193.55
9	SUN	103	30	206.00

Appendix D: Participant information residence data.

Classification of residence data.

The participant group were selected for suitability based on a geographically limited but socially inclusive definition of eligibility. Participants needed to be living in Newcastle and/ or attending a Newcastle city high school. (For further detail on the rationale for this selection see section 4.3.4). As useful background for the reader, further information is included here about the postcode districts where participants lived. Firstly, in figure D1, maps are provided to give a reference of the location of the postcode districts in Newcastle. Postcodes highlighted in green are those which fall within the local authority with responsibility for schools provision in Newcastle.

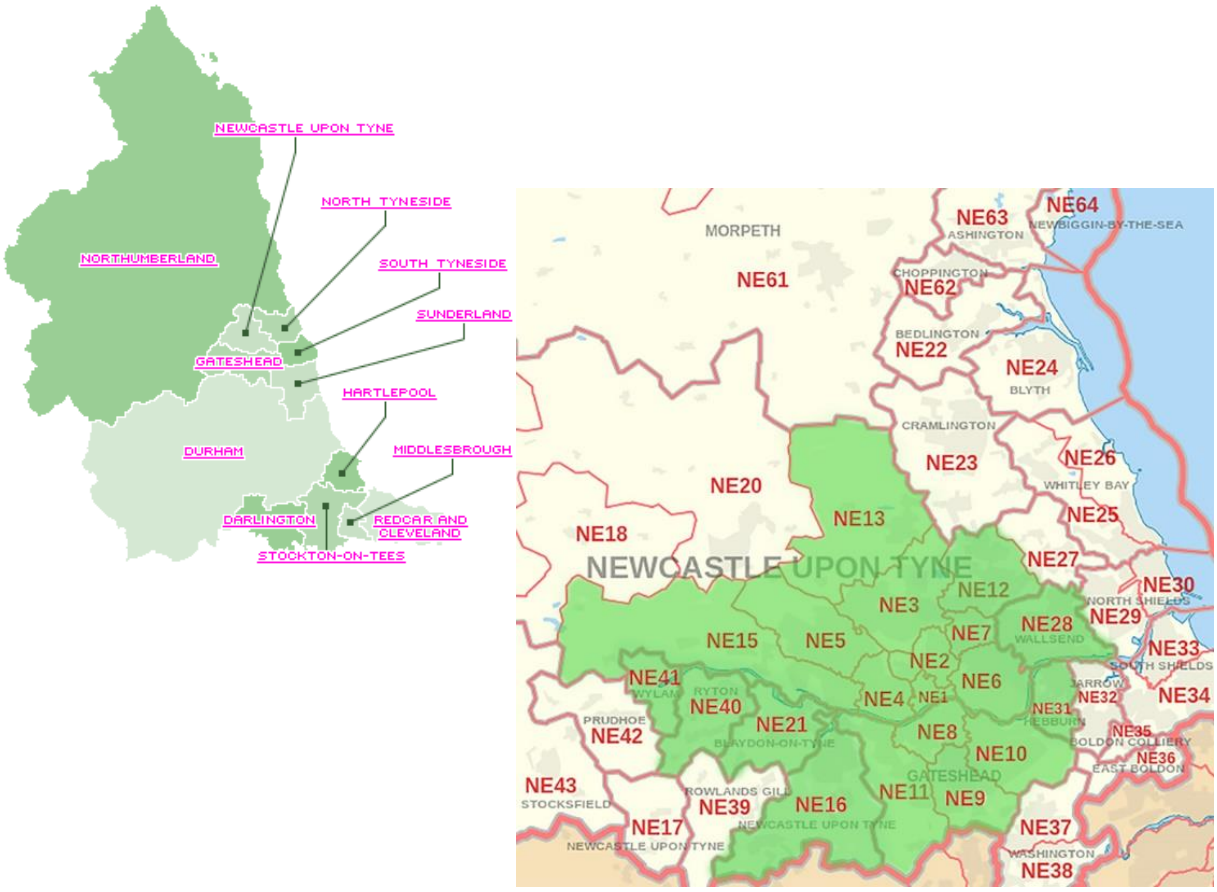


Figure D 1 Newcastle local authority and Newcastle post codes

The residence data recorded answers to the question: *'Which part of Newcastle do you live in, or do you live somewhere else? If so, where?*' Participants chose how to label the place they live. Using the area labels provided by participants, answers were coded using postcodes for the areas. The majority of the postcodes lie within the green highlighted area shown in figure D1. Some participants lived in postcodes bordering this area. These were then aggregated into simplified codes based on geographical direction from a central location of the city centre, which are presented in Table D1.

Table D1 Residence labels offered by participants, post codes and simplified codes

POST CODE	Residence labels offered by participants	Simplified code	Numerical code
NE1	City centre	central	1
NE2	Jesmond	central	1
NE3	Gosforth, Kingston Park	north	2
NE4	Fenham, Benwell	west	3
NE6	Walker, Byker,Heaton, Walkergate	east	4
NE7	High Heaton, Benton, Cochrane park	east	4
NE8	Gateshead	south	5
NE12	Killingworth, Longbenton, Forest Hall, West Moor	east	4
NE15	Lemington	west	3
NE18	Stamfordham	west	3
NE20	Ponteland	west	3
NE27	West Allotment, Holystone	east	4
NE28	Wallsend	east	4
NE36	East Boldon	south	5
NE39	Rowlands Gill	south	5
00	Durham		
0	No answer	o	
0	Don't live in Newcastle	o	

Missing data

Five participants were coded as zero. Three participants who had provided information for the speaker evaluation data had not completed the affiliation questionnaire at all. One participant had completed the affiliation questionnaire data but did not offer a place of residence One participant stated they did not live in Newcastle. In the charts below (Table D2 and Figure D2, the zero coded participants have been removed from the dataset.

Places of residence of participants according to postcode

The postcode information given in table D2 shows the geographical distribution of place of residence among the participant group.

Table D2 Frequencies and percentages of places of residence of participants according to postcode (N=148).

Postcode		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	NE 1	1	.7	.7
	NE 2	13	8.5	8.8
	NE 3	28	18.3	18.9
	NE 4	11	7.2	7.4
	NE 6	41	26.8	27.7
	NE 7	16	10.5	10.8
	NE 12	26	17.0	17.6
	NE 15	1	.7	.7
	NE 18	1	.7	.7
	NE 20	2	1.3	1.4
	NE 27	4	2.6	2.7
	NE 28	1	.7	.7

	NE 36	1	.7	.7
	NE 39	2	1.3	1.4
	Total	148	96.7	100.0
Missing	System	5	3.3	
Total		153	100.0	

The number of the postcode can be taken as a simple indication of distance from the city centre.

Figures D1 and D2 show that identifying participants according to the postcodes where they live, most participants live in relatively central Newcastle locations. The largest number of participants were resident in NE6 area, which is in the East of Newcastle. Of the outlying districts, five participants were from districts to the east of the city (West Allotment, Holystone and North Tyneside-all NE27and Wallsend NE28), four to the west (Lemington-NE15, Stamfordham -NE18 and Ponteland- NE20) and three to the south of the city (East Boldon- NE36 and Rowland's Gill -NE39). One participant was not living in the eligible boundaries but told me that had only recently moved to Durham from Jesmond (NE2). This was verified by the school. His data have been included as central city location.

It is apparent from Figure D3, below, that the majority of participants are resident in the east side of the city (almost 60%.) Roughly equal proportions of the sample are resident in central and in western locations (around 10%), with almost twice as many in the north (nearer to 20%). Very few participants are resident in districts to the south of the city, which is unsurprising as areas south of the Tyne fall into a completely different local authority.

Table D3 Frequencies and percentages of places of residence of participants according to simplified location codes (N=148)

Simplified residence area		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
1	central	14	9.2	9.5

2	north	28	18.3	18.9
3	west	15	9.8	10.1
4	east	88	57.5	59.5
5	south	3	2.0	2.0
	Total	148	96.7	100.0
Missing		5	3.3	
Total		153	100.0	

Using the simplified location codes, Table D3 shows that over half of participants (59.5%) live in locations to the east of the city centre. The proportions of the participants living in different areas can more clearly be seen on the pie chart, Figure D3.

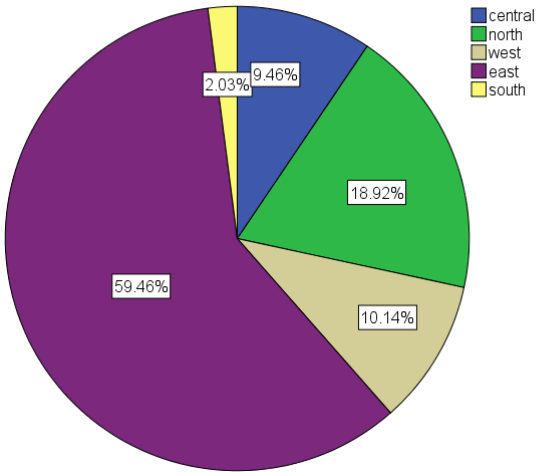


Figure D3 Pie chart showing percentages of participants according to simplified location codes (N=148).

Appendix E: Participating Institution information

Demographic information. Numbers of pupils enrolled in the school since 2009

2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2010
850	899	949	1018	1104	1144	1188	1250	1308	1365	1425

The steady annual increase in pupil runs should be seen in the context of the demographic situation in the local authority where pupil numbers have been falling over-all in the secondary school age-range.

How the pupil population at the school compares with the national figures in the 2018/2019 academic year.

	School	**England – mainstream secondary schools**
Total number of pupils on roll (all ages)	1364	3327970
Girls on roll	48.3%	49.8%
Boys on roll	51.7%	50.2%
Pupils with an SEN Education, Health and Care Plan	1.2%	1.7%
Pupils with SEN Support	5.8%	10.8%
Pupils whose first language is not English	21.9%	16.9%
Pupils eligible for free school meals at any time during the past 6 years	23.7%	27.7%

The above data shows that the intake of the school has a typical distribution compared with the school population in England. The numbers on roll are similarly divided between boys and girls, and there is roughly similar proportion of students with an SEN Education, Health and Care plan. More than a fifth of students have a first language that is not English and almost a quarter of pupils have been eligible for free school meals.

School performance data

Government measures of school performance: progress 8 and attainment 8

In order to understand the school performance measures listed below, I will first briefly explain 3 measures used; attainment 8, progress 8 and EBacc.

Progress 8 and attainment 8 measure pupil performance across 8 subjects at the end of year 11 (aged 16). Attainment 8 measures the achievement of a pupil across 8 qualifications. Each individual grade a pupil achieves is assigned a point score, which is then used to calculate a pupil's Attainment 8 score.

Progress 8 is a value-added measure, which means that pupils' results are compared to the achievements of other pupils with similar prior attainment. A pupil's progress score is the difference between their actual Attainment 8 result and the national average attainment score of those in their prior attainment group. To create a school level progress score. the Progress 8 scores of all the pupils in year 11 are added together and divided by the number of pupils in the school. A negative score does not mean that pupils did not make any progress; rather it means they made less progress than other pupils nationally with similar starting points. A score of 0 means pupils in this school on average do about as well as those with similar prior attainment nationally. A positive score means pupils in this school on average do better than those with similar prior attainment nationally. A negative score means pupils in this school on average do worse than those with similar prior attainment nationally.

(Information summarised from Department for Education, 2016)

EBacc qualifications.

The EBacc is a set of 5 subjects at GCSE.

The EBacc is:

- English language and literature
- maths
- the sciences
- geography or history
- a language

Secondary schools are measured on the number of pupils that take GCSEs in these core subjects. Schools are also measured on how well their pupils do in these subjects.

(paraphrased from Department for Education guidance, 2019)

Government measures of school performance comparing the data collection site with local and national measures.

Progress 8 score

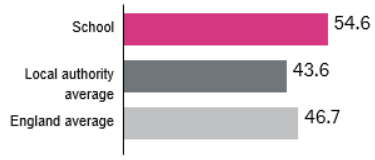
Above average 0.28

The local authority (Newcastle upon Tyne) average score for state-funded schools is -0.27

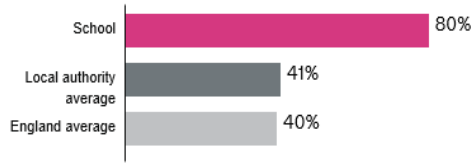
The average score for all state-funded schools in England is -0.03

Staying in education or entering employment

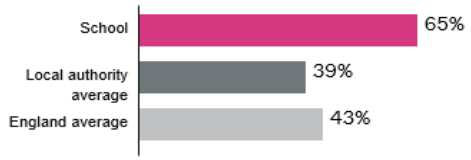
Attainment 8 score



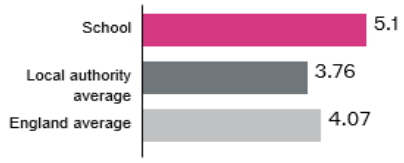
Entering Ebacc



Grade 5 or above in English & maths GCSEs



EBacc average point score



Core values

The following information is taken from the school website. The exam results section reports marginally higher progress 8 results than those seen above (0.29 as opposed to 0.28). One explanation for this could be that later figures are sometimes slightly amended in the light of exam re-marking, so I think it is likely the school has reported later upgraded scores.

The core values of XXXX School
 An excellent school which celebrates each student`s unique set of God-given gifts and talents and ensures that students use their gifts and talents to the full.

• A school which strives to live by the message of the Gospel, offering students opportunities for spiritual growth and development, whatever their faith background, supporting them on their individual journey and preparing them for their life to come.

• A school which strives for excellence in everything it does, whether in the academic achievement of our students or in the quality and range of opportunities which we provide for their all-round development outside the classroom.

• A school which puts learning and teaching at the heart of school life and prepares students really well for the next stage in their education, whether at University or in the workplace.

• A school of which we can all be rightly proud, offering our students a first class education and helping them to develop as well rounded individuals who are ready and able to take their place in the wider world, as happy, confident and self- aware young adults with a sense of service to their communities.

Exam success at XXXX

Our students' progress and attainment are excellent, among the very best in the north-east and UK. XXXX is one of 5 north-east schools with the highest value added achievement score, when measured across all the Ebacc subjects of English, Maths, Sciences, Languages and Humanities.

Recent attainment is as follows:-

GCSE

- Significantly above average again in 2019 for our "Progress 8" score (0.29)
- 80%+ Grade 4+ in Maths and English, with 65% Level 5+, amongst the highest in the North East
- Over 80% grade 4+ across the other EBacc subjects.
- 32% of all entries were graded at 9-7 and 84% at grades 9-4

A LEVEL

- 31% of entries were graded at A*-A. This is one of the highest percentages of top grades for any state school regionally or nationally.
- 57% of A Levels were A*-B and 80% A*-C and 98% A*-E

100% Vocational A Level pass rate with 63% at Distinction or better and 100% at Merit or better

In the Sixth Form, our students have an excellent track record of gaining a place at their first or second choice university. We have successfully prepared students for entry into leading universities such as Oxbridge, St Andrews, Durham, Edinburgh and Russell Group Universities to study Medicine, Law, Architecture, Maths, Languages and many other challenging degree courses. Sixth Form numbers have consequently increased steadily over the last few years and now exceed 200 students, all following a wide range of A Level courses.

Positive climate for learning at XXXX

You will find XXXX to be an orderly, well-disciplined community, where learning flourishes for all students. Ofsted described student behaviour as outstanding. We have high standards and high expectations of students regarding behaviour and readiness for learning. Students know where they stand. Rules are simple, sensible and consistently applied so that students feel safe and secure and know what is expected of them. We are smaller than some of the very large secondary schools in the city and we believe that this is a distinct advantage, as our smaller tutor groups and class sizes allow us to get to know our students really well and offer excellent pastoral care.

We praise students for their efforts and celebrate their achievements in many different ways. We believe that such a positive climate promotes learning and inspires students to fulfil their potential. Excellent student behaviour has played a major part in our record results in the last three years. Students of all abilities and backgrounds mix really well together at XXXX and there is a positive and happy atmosphere in the school.

Appendix F: Pairwise comparisons: high-ranking

Pairwise Comparisons

Measure: MEASURE_1

(I) highranking	(J) highranking	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.[b]	95% Confidence Interval for Difference[b] Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	.993*	.223	.001	.266	1.721
	3	1.289*	.187	.000	.681	1.897
	4	1.412*	.197	.000	.769	2.054
	5	1.469*	.201	.000	.813	2.125
	6	1.929*	.218	.000	1.218	2.639
	7	2.163*	.208	.000	1.487	2.840
	8	2.449*	.215	.000	1.748	3.150
	9	2.531*	.214	.000	1.833	3.229
2	1	-.993*	.223	.001	-1.721	-.266
	3	.296	.190	1.000	-.325	.917
	4	.418	.169	.510	-.131	.968
	5	.476	.157	.101	-.034	.987
	6	.935*	.158	.000	.420	1.451
	7	1.170*	.166	.000	.630	1.710
	8	1.456*	.187	.000	.848	2.064
	9	1.537*	.177	.000	.961	2.114
3	1	-1.289*	.187	.000	-1.897	-.681
	2	-.296	.190	1.000	-.917	.325
	4	.122	.162	1.000	-.405	.650
	5	.180	.144	1.000	-.288	.649
	6	.639*	.187	.029	.030	1.249
	7	.874*	.178	.000	.294	1.454
	8	1.160*	.181	.000	.568	1.751
	9	1.241*	.193	.000	.612	1.871
4	1	-1.412*	.197	.000	-2.054	-.769
	2	-.418	.169	.510	-.968	.131
	3	-.122	.162	1.000	-.650	.405
	5	.058	.141	1.000	-.402	.518
	6	.517	.167	.085	-.028	1.062
	7	.752*	.176	.001	.177	1.326
	8	1.037*	.185	.000	.435	1.639
	9	1.119*	.195	.000	.483	1.755
5	1	-1.469*	.201	.000	-2.125	-.813
	2	-.476	.157	.101	-.987	.034

	3	-.180	.144	1.000	-.649	.288
	4	-.058	.141	1.000	-.518	.402
	6	.459	.161	.183	-.067	.985
	7	.694*	.158	.001	.178	1.210
	8	.980*	.174	.000	.411	1.548
	9	1.061*	.188	.000	.449	1.673
6	1	-1.929*	.218	.000	-2.639	-1.218
	2	-.935*	.158	.000	-1.451	-.420
	3	-.639*	.187	.029	-1.249	-.030
	4	-.517	.167	.085	-1.062	.028
	5	-.459	.161	.183	-.985	.067
	7	.235	.157	1.000	-.278	.747
	8	.520*	.154	.033	.019	1.022
	9	.602*	.171	.021	.044	1.160
7	1	-2.163*	.208	.000	-2.840	-1.487
	2	-1.170*	.166	.000	-1.710	-.630
	3	-.874*	.178	.000	-1.454	-.294
	4	-.752*	.176	.001	-1.326	-.177
	5	-.694*	.158	.001	-1.210	-.178
	6	-.235	.157	1.000	-.747	.278
	8	.286	.156	1.000	-.224	.795
	9	.367	.163	.934	-.165	.900
8	1	-2.449*	.215	.000	-3.150	-1.748
	2	-1.456*	.187	.000	-2.064	-.848
	3	-1.160*	.181	.000	-1.751	-.568
	4	-1.037*	.185	.000	-1.639	-.435
	5	-.980*	.174	.000	-1.548	-.411
	6	-.520*	.154	.033	-1.022	-.019
	7	-.286	.156	1.000	-.795	.224
	9	.082	.143	1.000	-.386	.549
9	1	-2.531*	.214	.000	-3.229	-1.833
	2	-1.537*	.177	.000	-2.114	-.961
	3	-1.241*	.193	.000	-1.871	-.612
	4	-1.119*	.195	.000	-1.755	-.483
	5	-1.061*	.188	.000	-1.673	-.449
	6	-.602*	.171	.021	-1.160	-.044
	7	-.367	.163	.934	-.900	.165
	8	-.082	.143	1.000	-.549	.386

Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

Appendix G: Pairwise comparisons: friendly

Pairwise Comparisons

Measure: MEASURE_1

(I) friendly	(J) friendly	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.[b]	95% Confidence Interval for Difference[b]	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	.983*	.166	.000	.442	1.524
	3	1.142*	.164	.000	.607	1.677
	4	1.267*	.150	.000	.777	1.757
	5	1.497*	.160	.000	.977	2.017
	6	1.691*	.191	.000	1.069	2.313
	7	2.226*	.238	.000	1.451	3.001
	8	2.230*	.191	.000	1.607	2.852
	9	2.517*	.212	.000	1.826	3.208
2	1	-.983*	.166	.000	-1.524	-.442
	3	.159	.170	1.000	-.394	.711
	4	.284	.154	1.000	-.219	.786
	5	.514	.172	.122	-.048	1.076
	6	.708*	.183	.006	.111	1.305
	7	1.243*	.209	.000	.563	1.923
	8	1.247*	.211	.000	.558	1.935
	9	1.534*	.217	.000	.826	2.242
3	1	-1.142*	.164	.000	-1.677	-.607
	2	-.159	.170	1.000	-.711	.394
	4	.125	.163	1.000	-.405	.655
	5	.355	.162	1.000	-.174	.883
	6	.549	.170	.056	-.006	1.104
	7	1.084*	.184	.000	.485	1.684
	8	1.088*	.177	.000	.513	1.663
	9	1.375*	.177	.000	.798	1.952
4	1	-1.267*	.150	.000	-1.757	-.777
	2	-.284	.154	1.000	-.786	.219
	3	-.125	.163	1.000	-.655	.405
	5	.230	.158	1.000	-.285	.744
	6	.424	.193	1.000	-.205	1.053
	7	.959*	.213	.000	.266	1.653
	8	.963*	.181	.000	.373	1.552
	9	1.250*	.186	.000	.644	1.856
5	1	-1.497*	.160	.000	-2.017	-.977
	2	-.514	.172	.122	-1.076	.048
	3	-.355	.162	1.000	-.883	.174

	4	-.230	.158	1.000	-.744	.285
	6	.194	.179	1.000	-.389	.778
	7	.730*	.221	.043	.010	1.450
	8	.733*	.180	.003	.145	1.321
	9	1.020*	.176	.000	.446	1.594
6	1	-1.691*	.191	.000	-2.313	-1.069
	2	-.708*	.183	.006	-1.305	-.111
	3	-.549	.170	.056	-1.104	.006
	4	-.424	.193	1.000	-1.053	.205
	5	-.194	.179	1.000	-.778	.389
	7	.535	.185	.154	-.066	1.137
	8	.539	.192	.208	-.088	1.166
	9	.826*	.172	.000	.267	1.385
7	1	-2.226*	.238	.000	-3.001	-1.451
	2	-1.243*	.209	.000	-1.923	-.563
	3	-1.084*	.184	.000	-1.684	-.485
	4	-.959*	.213	.000	-1.653	-.266
	5	-.730*	.221	.043	-1.450	-.010
	6	-.535	.185	.154	-1.137	.066
	8	.003	.216	1.000	-.702	.708
	9	.291	.209	1.000	-.389	.970
8	1	-2.230*	.191	.000	-2.852	-1.607
	2	-1.247*	.211	.000	-1.935	-.558
	3	-1.088*	.177	.000	-1.663	-.513
	4	-.963*	.181	.000	-1.552	-.373
	5	-.733*	.180	.003	-1.321	-.145
	6	-.539	.192	.208	-1.166	.088
	7	-.003	.216	1.000	-.708	.702
	9	.287	.166	1.000	-.254	.828
9	1	-2.517*	.212	.000	-3.208	-1.826
	2	-1.534*	.217	.000	-2.242	-.826
	3	-1.375*	.177	.000	-1.952	-.798
	4	-1.250*	.186	.000	-1.856	-.644
	5	-1.020*	.176	.000	-1.594	-.446
	6	-.826*	.172	.000	-1.385	-.267
	7	-.291	.209	1.000	-.970	.389
	8	-.287	.166	1.000	-.828	.254

Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

b. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

Appendix H Ethics documentation

5 documents were used. The wording of the information sheet and the consent form was kept as close as possible to the template documents supplied by Northumbria University.

Voice recording initial information	Handed to each speaker to read through before beginning recording.
Voice recording debrief sheet-participant information	Explanation given by the researcher verbally at the end of the recording. Questions invited. Hard copy given to participant to be read before consent and retained afterwards.
Voice recording consent form	Fully informed consent requested only after debriefing. 2 copies given to participant, one to signed and handed back to the researcher, the other to be retained by the participant for future reference if required.
Participant information	Participants were verbally given information at the start of the session which included the fact that they would be asked to make judgements about the impressions that they formed of speakers. Debriefing occurred verbally mid-way through the procedure, once the impressions and evaluations had been recorded. It was explained at that point that the focus of study was responses to accented speech, and that the study would be looking at listener responses, rather than the performance of speakers. Information sheets were distributed at the end of the session for participants to retain.
Participant consent form	Consent forms were also distributed at the end of the session. Participants were informed that if for any reason they did not wish to participate, their data would not be

	included and would not be kept. These consent forms needed parental signatures. To err on the side of caution, because the data was collected in a school setting, parental signatures were requested even where school students were already 18 years old. Information was only included as data from people whose signed consent forms were returned to the researcher. At this point, unusable information was destroyed.

Research information sheet-before recording

Why do you want me to make a voice recording?

You are invited to provide voice recordings for other young people to listen to. The researcher is not studying your voice recording. The research will focus on the attitudes and opinions of the young people who are listening to the recording.

They will be interested in what you say about university life and will get an impression from you of what it is like to be away from home.

What will happen as part of the research?

You will read out and answer a set of frequently asked questions. The set that you are answering are about student accommodation.

The researcher will make a recording of you reading the questions and answering them.

This recording may be chosen as one of a selection of impressions of university life that will be played to young people.

The researcher will be examining the young people's responses and opinions,

Will anyone know I've taken part in the research?

Your details will remain anonymous. The participants in the research will not be given any information about who you are.

Research information debriefing sheet- voice recordings

Folklinguistic perceptions of language spoken in the north of England

The purpose of this study is to investigate what language and sense of place mean to young people in Newcastle, and what attitudes they have towards different local varieties of speech. It is being carried out by Judith Taylor at Northumbria University. After this research has been completed some of the findings may be published in academic journals so that other researchers who are interested in English in the north of England or in attitudes to language varieties can share what this research has found out.

This sheet tells you all about the research. I would like you provide a voice sample for the research and this sheet helps answer questions you might have about it. Once you've read the sheet, or talked about it with the researcher, you can decide whether you'd like to take part or not.

What are you trying to find out?

The research is investigating what young people's attitudes are to different speech in the north of England.

What will happen as part of the research?

In the part of the research you are involved in, participants will respond to speakers from different parts of the north of England. Your voice recording may be chosen as one of the samples of speech they will listen to.

Why do you want me to take part?

You have been chosen because you are from one of the areas of the north of England targeted in the study. Your voice may sound different to the listeners than speakers from other parts of the north of England.

What if I don't want to take part?

That's not a problem. You don't have to be a part of the study if you don't want to.

What if I change my mind?

If you are not happy to continue with your involvement, just let the researcher know. That's fine.

Will you write down things that I say?

I will record what you say,, so that the participants in the research can listen to your voice.

Will anyone know I've taken part in the research?

Your part in this research will be entirely confidential. Your name will not be used at all in the published research.

How do I know that you're going to keep my information safely?

The information will be stored securely on the Northumbria University computer system, and will only be used in accordance with University policy guidelines.

The research has been reviewed and approved by the Department of Humanities Research Ethics Committee at Northumbria University, and the research complies with the Data Protection Act.

What's going to happen after you've done all this research?

The research will be used to write a PhD thesis. Some parts of the research may be reported in academic journal articles or presented at conferences in the future.

OK, I think I want to take part

On the next page there's a consent form to sign. You should keep this information sheet, just in case you have any questions.

I want to know more about the research

You can ask the researcher whenever you see her about the research. She will be happy to answer your questions. The researcher is Judith Taylor from Northumbria University.

I want to complain about the research or report something about the research I'm unhappy with

You should tell the researcher. If you're not happy to do that, please tell Dr. Phillip Wallage, (Research Ethics lead for the Department of Humanities) at the address below and he will pass on your worry to the researcher at the university involved.

Dr. Phillip Wallage, (Research Ethics lead for the Department of Humanities)
Faculty of Art, Design and Social Sciences
Lipman Building, Northumbria University
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 8ST
phillip.wallage@northumbria.ac.uk

Research Consent Form (participant)

Name of project

Folklinguistic Perceptions of Varieties of English spoken in the north of England

Organisation(s) initiating research

Northumbria University

Researchers' names

Judith Taylor

Research Organisation

Northumbria University

Participant's name – write your name in here

- I confirm that I have been supplied with and have read and understood an Information Sheet for the research project and have had time to decide whether or not I want to participate.
- I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.
- I agree with Northumbria University recording and processing this information about me.
- I understand that this information will only be used for the purposes set out in the information sheet.
- I have been told that any data generated by the research will be securely managed and disposed of in accordance with Northumbria University's guidelines.
- I am aware that all tapes and documents will remain confidential with only the research team having access to them.
- My consent is conditional upon the University complying with its duties and obligations under the Data Protection Act.

I would like a copy of the report when it's published.

	Please tick
Yes	
No	
I'll decide later	

Signature of Participant Date

I can confirm that I have been paid £10 for providing a voice recording for this research

Signature of Participant Date

I can confirm that I have explained the nature of the research to the above named participant and have given adequate time to answer any questions concerning it.

Signature of Researcher Date

Research information sheet

Folklinguistic perceptions of varieties of English spoken in the north of England

The purpose of this study is to investigate what language and sense of place mean to young people in Newcastle, and what attitudes they have towards different local varieties of speech. It is being carried out by Judith Taylor at Northumbria University. After this research has been completed some of the findings may be published in academic journals so that other researchers who are interested in English in the north of England or in attitudes to language varieties can share what this research has found out.

This sheet tells you all about the research. I would like you to take part in the research and this sheet helps answer questions you might have about it. Once you've read the sheet, or talked about it with the researcher, you can decide whether you'd like to take part or not.

What are you trying to find out?

The research is investigating what young people's attitudes are to ways of speaking in the local area.

What will happen as part of the research?

There are three part of the survey :

1. You will be asked to listen to some voices and fill in a table to give your impressions of the speakers.
2. You will be given 3 maps of the local area. You will draw boundary lines the maps to show where you think people speak differently. Then you can write down comments about your ideas
3. There is also a set of questions to answer.

At a different session you could be invited to take part in a discussion group, but there would be another form for this.

Why do you want me to take part?

The research is finding out what meanings language and sense of place have for young people in Newcastle. Your responses to the tasks will be interesting to the researcher because you are a young person from the area who is well placed to comment on these matters.

What if I don't want to take part?

You don't have to take part in the research. It's not going to be a problem. It's up to you if you take part in the research. We only use information from people who have agreed to take part.

What if I change my mind?

If, after a session, you change your mind about taking part, that's OK. You are not tied in to any follow-up sessions.

Will you write down things that I say?

Yes, I will sometimes write down things that you say about what you're doing. This is because I think that it's useful and interesting and that it will help me to understand your ideas. Your name won't be used in the report.

Will anyone know I've taken part in the research?

Your part in this research will be entirely confidential. Your name will not be used at all in the published research.

How do I know that you're going to keep my information safely?

The information will be stored in a locked storage locker at Northumbria University. The records of the information you have given to me will be destroyed by Northumbria University after the end of the project.

The research has been reviewed and approved by the Department of Humanities Research Ethics Committee at Northumbria University, and the research complies with the Data Protection Act.

What's going to happen after you've done all this research?

The research will be used to write PhD thesis. Some parts of the research may be reported in academic journal articles in the future.

OK, I think I want to take part

On the next page there's a consent form to sign. If you are a school student, your parents need to sign it as well, even if you are 18 years old already. You should keep this information sheet, just in case you have any questions.

I want to know more about the research

You can ask the researcher whenever you see her about the research. She will be happy to answer your questions. The researcher is Judith Taylor from Northumbria University.

I want to complain about the research or report something about the research I'm unhappy with

You should tell the researcher. If you're not happy to do that, please tell Dr. Phillip Wallage, (Research Ethics lead for the Department of Humanities) at the address below and he will pass on your worry to the researcher at the university involved.

Dr. Phillip Wallage, (Research Ethics lead for the Department of Humanities)
Faculty of Art, Design and Social Sciences
Lipman Building, Northumbria University
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 8ST
phillip.wallage@northumbria.ac.uk

Research Consent Form (participant)

Name of project

Folklinguistic perceptions of varieties of English spoken in the north of England

Organisation(s) initiating research

Northumbria University

Researchers' names

Judith Taylor

Research Organisation

Northumbria University

Participant's name – write your name in here

- I confirm that I have been supplied with and have read and understood an Information Sheet for the research project and have had time to decide whether or not I want to participate.
- I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.
- I agree with Northumbria University recording and processing this information about me.
- I understand that this information will only be used for the purposes set out in the information sheet.
- I have been told that any data generated by the research will be securely managed and disposed of in accordance with Northumbria University's guidelines.
- I am aware that all tapes and documents will remain confidential with only the research team having access to them.
- My consent is conditional upon the University complying with its duties and obligations under the Data Protection Act.

I would like a copy of the report when it's published.

	Please tick
Yes	
No	
I'll decide later	

Signature of Participant (even if below 18 years old) Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian/Representative

(if participant is under 18 years old) Date

I can confirm that I have explained the nature of the research to the above named participant and have given adequate time to answer any questions concerning it.

Signature of Researcher Date
